

SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY MANIFESTO



BUILDING SCOTLAND



AMBITIONS FOR SCOTLAND

Everything my Party and I have done in the last four years has been for the people of Scotland. It is the people of Scotland who drive me and my Party forward.

That is why this election is so important. Perhaps the most important election in Scotland for a generation.

Our country stands at a crossroads. On 3rd May our people have a choice between two futures. Between building up Scotland or an uncertain route to breaking up Britain.

With Labour in the Scottish Parliament, there are 200,000 more jobs. Economic growth is picking up pace, population decline has been reversed and average earnings are rising faster than any other part of the UK.

In the early years of the 21st century Scotland is succeeding. But the challenges in the next decades of the 21st century are without precedent.

Globalisation is creating new economic super powers providing both stiff competition and new market opportunities; technological advance is changing the way in which the world lives, communicates and conducts its business; climate change has arrived, is undisputed and brings with it challenges and threats to all humanity.

In a world of such uncertainty yet enormous opportunity, Scotland needs a vision that will allow Scots to lead successful and fulfilling lives.

My vision, Labour's vision, for Scotland in the next decade is clear:

- To embrace the best of globalisation, yet mitigate the worst it brings.
- To ride the crest of the technological and scientific wave, fully participating and at times driving it.
- To play a greater than equal part in the global effort to reduce carbon emissions.

I believe Scotland has the greatest chance of success within this fast changing and uncertain world if we play to our strengths. We have the best of both worlds: the strength and stability of a large and powerful nation state and the dynamism and drive of devolved government.

Four years ago, I made two promises to the people of Scotland: economic growth would be our top priority; and we would take comprehensive action against anti-social behaviour.

Labour did both, and now economic growth is consistently above our 30 year average and new police powers increasingly mean families across Scotland are being relieved of the misery of bad behaviour in their neighbourhoods.

We have made further progress too. Scotland's education system is amongst the top in the world. Our health service has the shortest waiting times ever and the nation's health is getting better thanks to the smoking ban. Crime is falling with 1000 fewer violent crimes last year.

No other nation of similar size can boast Scotland's combination of economic strength, and improving public services. Others envy the quality of life we enjoy.

But let's not stop now. Devolution was designed to be a tool to build Scottish ambitions and Scottish success.

My overall objective for the next term of the Scottish Parliament is to build sustainable economic prosperity. I passionately believe the best way to achieve that prosperity is through the potential of Scotland's greatest natural resource – our people.

It is in our knowledge and our skills that we will build greater competitive advantage. It is in our flexibility and learning that we will find the jobs of the future. It is in our innovation and our expertise that we will grow successful companies. And it is through education that we will lift people from poverty, deprivation and neglect.

200,000 new jobs have been created in the last eight years – now we want to create 100,000 more, with 50,000 Modern Apprenticeships and 100 new Skills Academies to give our children and the economy the trades we need. And we will end dropping out at 16 and 17 with our radical plans to make leaving school before 18 conditional on a youngster being in education or training.

Crime has fallen throughout this nation but if there is one community that lives in the fear of crime then we must address that. Our health service reforms will deliver better and quicker medical treatment with more action to prevent ill health too.

One of the toughest lessons I have learnt being First Minister, is that building Scotland is not easy. It takes time. It takes effort. It has to be done brick by brick, school by school, hospital by hospital.

Building Scotland is not the work of one person, but of all of us.

Building Scotland is why I came into politics, why I stick at politics, why my determination never wavers.

I am proud of what we have achieved. I know there is much more still to do.

I am very proud to fight this election on a Labour manifesto, not for the status quo, but a manifesto for radical change – radical change not for the lives of our politicians but for the lives of those we serve – the people of Scotland.



Rt. Hon. Jack McConnell
First Minister





BUILDING SCOTLAND



CONTENTS

- 8 Building Prosperity**
Economy, jobs, skills, science, business, towns & cities, energy
- 24 Building Futures**
Schools, colleges, universities, early years, vulnerable children
- 38 Building Safer Communities**
Crime, justice, supporting victims
- 52 Building a Healthier Scotland**
Improving health, faster treatment, dignity in care
- 66 Building a Sustainable Scotland**
Climate change, the environment, rural communities
- 76 Building Strong Families & Communities**
Social justice, older people, volunteering, housing, transport
- 90 Building Creativity**
Culture, arts, sport, languages
- 96 Building Better Government**
Democracy, local government, Europe, international development



BUILDING PROSPERITY



With Labour, Scotland's economy is being transformed. Low inflation and interest rates have enabled Scottish Labour to put in place the policies needed to tackle the long-term challenges which have held Scotland back and to support and harness the energy and talent of our citizens.

The results have been impressive.

Scotland's economy has grown every year since 1997. More than 250,000 new jobs have been created. Scotland's employment rate is now better than the rest of the UK and amongst the best in Europe. Migration to Scotland is at its highest in decades. Nine out of ten graduates now stay in Scotland.

Scotland is increasingly seen as a place to set up business. Our world-class universities, educated workforce and the quality of life on offer are attracting many of the high-tech sectors of the future. Scotland is already a world-leader in life sciences.

Scottish Labour has invested strongly in skills and supporting industry. There has been a dramatic expansion in modern apprenticeships. We have invested as well in modernising Scotland's infrastructure to improve transport links.

This success has been underpinned by Labour's successful and stable management of the economy. Scotland suffered badly from the high interest rates, high unemployment and recessions of the Tory years. The strength of the UK economy has enabled firms to invest in Scotland with confidence. We are building a country that is competing successfully in the global economy and can look to the future with optimism.

But the uncertainty and confusion caused by plans to wrench Scotland out of the United Kingdom would damage this confidence. Plans for higher taxes would threaten existing and new jobs and rising living standards.

Scottish Labour has different priorities for Scotland. For the first time in decades, full employment in Scotland is within our grasp. We are determined to put in place the policies which will see the number of jobs, and high-skilled jobs, continuing to grow. We will invest further in skills and education: continue improving our infrastructure and step up the promotion of Scottish business abroad.

To continue building a world-class economy, Scottish Labour will

- aim for full and fulfilling employment with a high skill knowledge based economy.
- retain and enhance Scotland's position as the skills capital of Britain. We will ensure that at least 50% of the working age population hold a vocational or academic higher education qualification by 2020 with 90% of the working age population qualified to level 2 or above.
- enhance Scotland's position as a leading science nation and improve levels of research and development as a proportion of GDP.
- ensure Scotland's business environment remains competitive, reducing the regulatory burden, not just on business, but on organisations and individuals too.
- cut administrative burdens by a quarter by 2012.
- invest and support six key high growth industries: life sciences; renewable energy; electronic markets; financial services; tourism and food & drink, raising the overall growth rate of the Scottish economy.
- increase Scotland's population, attracting Scots back home, and welcoming the world's brightest and best to Scotland to contribute to our future prosperity.

- plan and secure Scotland's long term energy needs with a mixed energy supply, secure sustainable economic growth and become a world leader in tackling climate change.



FULL & FULFILLING EMPLOYMENT

With Labour in Westminster and Holyrood, 250,000 new jobs have been created in Scotland since 1997. Scotland's employment rate is above the UK rate, is higher than every G7 country and the highest in the Euro zone. For the first time in a generation, the unemployment rate in Scotland is below the UK level.

From this remarkable record, Scotland now has a historic opportunity to reach full and fulfilling employment. Scottish Labour will grasp this chance and establish a new Full Employment Agency to take Scotland the final steps needed to achieve this goal.

While Labour's Workforce Plus programme is making good progress in getting a further 63,000 people off benefit and back to work by 2010, now is the time to go further.

We want the Full Employment Agency to work closely with the UK Government. Our ambition is to help 100,000 people off benefit and into work by 2015 as Scotland moves towards full employment. To achieve this we will end 16-19 year olds not being in employment, education or training, reduce the number of adults on incapacity benefit and help lone parents into work and training.

Scotland's private sector is responding well to globalisation and increased international competition. But globalisation also brings the threat, particularly for those in lower skilled industries, of jobs moving to countries with lower wages. Scots workers have already proven themselves to be highly adaptable and flexible, but Scottish Labour will improve support for workers to re-skill and make the transition when industries change.

Careers guidance will have a greater role assisting individuals to adapt to future economic opportunities so Scottish Labour will invest further in an improved all-age careers guidance service, as well as strengthening the connections between local authorities, employers and schools.

The defence industry has long been a significant employer in Scotland. Scottish Labour will continue to work in partnership with the UK government to ensure that not only is Scotland well placed to attract

further defence contracts but also that the Defence Diversification Agency can effectively translate technological expertise into an economic advantage for the Scottish economy.

Whilst full employment is Scottish Labour's ambitious target, fulfilling employment is a core part of our Labour values. We want every worker to be properly trained, well respected and properly valued for the contribution they make.

In 1997, 85,000 Scots earned less than £2.50 an hour. Labour's National Minimum Wage, now set at £5.35 an hour, has helped lift thousands of Scots out of poverty. But some unscrupulous employers continue to pay below this level and ignore other legal rights given to working people. Scottish Labour will continue to ensure these rights are enforced and protected. We will work with the UK Government to step up efforts to inform workers of their rights through public information campaigns. Scottish Labour will work constructively with employers to help ensure they address the issue of equal pay.

Scottish Labour will work with companies who are training their workforce and examine ways to maximise the use of local labour recruitment for all publicly funded schemes.

Labour has led the way in developing an Action Plan on Health & Safety in Scotland, and will ensure that it is implemented, in partnership with trade unions, business organisations and the HSE. While the UK health and safety framework is one of the strictest in the world, the number of accidents in the workplace in Scotland concerns Labour. We will look further at the reasons behind Scotland's accident statistics and we will challenge any complacency in the workplace, fostering a more co-operative approach, and support the development of trade union safety representatives in the workplace.

We will support workplace initiatives to promote health improvement and tackle health inequalities. We will continue to support Scotland's Health at Work Awards and the Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives.

We have agreed a full agenda for Scotland's working people within Labour's policy document 'Scotland's Future' and we will implement it.

BUILDING THE SKILLS CAPITAL OF BRITAIN

Scotland is already the most highly skilled part of Britain, with more people with degree

level skills and qualifications than any nation in the UK. But we are determined to build on this strong position in the third term of the Scottish Parliament by providing opportunities for more people to learn and train more often and for more of the time. We will make Scotland the skills capital of Britain to help grow the Scottish economy, improve jobs and wages and provide more fulfilling employment for all.

In 1997, 23% of the workforce was qualified to level 4 (degree level). Now it is 31%. We want to ensure that at least 50% of the working age population hold a vocational or academic higher education qualification by 2020.

10 years ago, 69% of the Scottish workforce were qualified to level 2 (the equivalent of five or more Standard Grades) and above. Now it is 77%. We will now aim for 90% of the Scottish population to be level 2 and above by 2020.

In the third term of the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Labour will take the steps required to meet these ambitions by 2020:

- Increase the number of Modern Apprenticeships to 50,000 a year by 2011.
- Merge the Skill Seekers programme into the Modern Apprenticeship programme and raise standards and

quality throughout the system; create an 'Advanced Modern Apprenticeship' award to recognise the high level of skills required to achieve level 4 or level 5 MAs.

- Establish 100 Skills Academies in schools and colleges across the country, bringing back status and recognition for the value of vocational skills throughout school and the wider economy.

Reducing the number of young Scots who are not in education, employment or training has been a national priority for Scottish Labour. In the next term of the Scottish Parliament we will go much further by raising the age to 18 the age to which Scots must be in employment, education or training. We will step up our efforts in partnership with local authorities and the business community to ensure an array of opportunities are available to young Scots. We will also expand careers guidance services within schools, particularly schools in areas with a large NEET group.

Labour will also seek to build upon the success of learndirect scotland and Individual Learning Accounts. We will use the successful learner account system to encourage and support part time workers and low skilled workers to develop their skills and abilities through direct funding to lift skills levels above level 2.

We will expand the existing partnership agreements between learndirect scotland and Scotland's unions to actively promote work based learning. In line with 'Train to Gain' we will expand learndirect scotland for business, to provide support and advice for small businesses to undertake work based learning.

Labour will establish a powerful alliance between learning providers, Scotland's further education colleges and learndirect scotland to implement a national campaign to actively promote part time learning, learning to those over 50 and work based learning within small and rural businesses.

Labour wants to work with businesses and trade unions to upskill Scotland's entire workforce. Should it prove necessary, we will raise with the UK government the case for a levy to ensure that all businesses commit dedicated resources to training.

SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND R&D

Scottish knowledge and discoveries have produced incalculable benefits for the world – from the telephone, the television and penicillin to Dolly the Sheep. Our long tradition of excellence in science stands us in good stead for the challenges that will

face us, as individuals and as a nation, in the 21st century.

With one scientist for every 100 people, Scotland is already a leading science nation. Scottish Labour is determined to build upon and invest in that excellent science base.

We will invest significantly in schools to inspire more young Scots with the wonders of learning science and we will champion the successes of Scottish breakthroughs and scientific achievement. We will support Scotland's science centres and give the Glasgow Science Centre national status.

The next challenge is to translate that broad science base into an economic advantage.

Scottish Labour will provide national leadership to universities, enterprise agencies and private businesses to bring them together and encourage greater collaboration. We will invest in and improve the 'pipeline of support' so that new ideas are supported all the way from the laboratory to the production line.

We will invest in Scotland's three Intermediate Technology Institutes, supporting pre-competitive research in order to make it market ready.

We will create a Scottish National Institute for Life Sciences in Dundee, building on the tremendous scientific advances made there in recent years.

Scotland's businesses are innovating to greater levels, with over half of Scottish firms 'innovation active', a 12% increase since 2000. With emerging economic giants like China and India, Scotland must do more.

Scottish Labour will seek to encourage increased business expenditure in research and development and improve the rate of spin-out companies from Scotland's universities. Scottish Labour will cut business rates for businesses who undertake significant research and development.

Labour at Westminster will agree specific targets with each Research Council to increase the amount of collaborative R&D they conduct in partnership with the Technology Strategy Board. Scottish Labour will fully participate in the UK-wide Technology Strategy Board and we will contribute additional resources and work in partnership with the TSB to support technology areas where Scotland is strong.

We will work to improve the provision of e-commerce to improve Scotland's performance on online trading.

BUILDING A BETTER BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Scottish Labour believes in the fundamental importance of private business for Scotland's future. The private sector is the prime engine of new jobs. Without the success of private business, we would not be able to support investment in our public services. We will encourage enterprise and foster an entrepreneurial culture, we will encourage Scottish business to internationalise, we will continue to improve access to long-term capital and equity, we will create better regulation and boost small businesses.

We will step up our efforts to promote Scotland abroad, showing that Scotland as a great place to live, work, visit and do business. We will use the Global Scot network of prominent and successful Scots based abroad to help us. Labour will also develop our international marketing and further improve the co-ordination of work between Scottish Development International, VisitScotland and other agencies.

Determined to Succeed (DtS) is Scottish Labour's enterprise education programme and has been expanded to every school

in the country. High quality enterprise education is vital, not just to develop budding entrepreneurs for the future, but in teaching youngsters key skills such as leadership and initiative in a variety of business models including co-operative, social and private enterprise. Labour will develop DtS further, building on its strengths and mainstreaming the DtS approach throughout schools.

Scottish Labour has reduced the business rate burden for all Scottish companies in the last two years. We will now go further and target those who need support the most – Scotland's small businesses.

Scottish Labour will double the existing Small Business Rates Relief Scheme investing a further £30 million in small businesses, taking many start up and small rural businesses out of the rating system altogether. We will also reduce the burden of applications.

Scottish Labour will reduce the regulatory burden on business. In the third term of the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Labour will implement a step change in the way in which we ensure good legislation is created. Labour's objective is better regulation not de-regulation.

The cost of poor regulation applies not just to business. There is also unnecessary and wasteful intervention by rules and regulation on individuals, the public sector and the voluntary sector.

Early in the next parliamentary term, Scottish Labour will establish four key elements of a Better Regulation in Scotland policy:

- A new 'one in, one out' policy where every new regulation agreed in the next parliament will be accompanied by the removal or consolidation of an existing regulation;
- a cut in administrative burdens of at least 25% by 2012, with annual targets and independent monitoring of progress towards the targets;
- new sunset clauses in legislation which will ensure greater post-legislative scrutiny and the opportunity to weed out any unintended consequences of legislation;
- a smaller, more focussed legislative programme, allowing both the Executive and Parliamentary Committees to spend more time on each piece of legislation.

Scottish Labour has opened up procurement to allow small – and particularly local – companies to win

public sector contracts, by standardising contracts and placing procurement orders on the internet. In the third term of the Scottish Parliament we will go further, by ensuring all public bodies actively promote procurement opportunities to local businesses and implement the McLelland recommendations.

Scottish Labour will support and reform Scotland's enterprise agencies to establish a clearer investment framework for companies, maximise EU funding, close the equity gap, improve the guidance and public accountability of the schemes that currently operate, and expand the investment in small and medium enterprises and manufacturing companies to secure the sustainable development of the Scottish economy.

Labour will support the Manufacturing Advisory Service to ensure it delivers its goals to improve the manufacturing capability of firms.

To ensure greater clarity for companies looking to expand and invest, we will transfer the remaining business support measures from the Scottish civil service into Scottish Enterprise. We will invest further in the Scottish Co-investment Fund.



BUILDING PROSPERITY

Highlands & Islands Enterprise has a unique remit to develop, not just the economy in the Highlands and Islands, but to develop communities too. Given their expertise in social enterprise, we will ask HIE to bring forward a report on an all-Scotland approach to support the development of social enterprise. We will continue to support co-operative models of business growth through Labour's Co-operative Development Agency.

Because economic prosperity is more than annual GDP growth, we will supplement GDP with indicators of wider well being.

Scottish Labour will look closely at international examples of Investment Banks and joint public-private equity funds. We will examine whether there are any market failures that would justify the creation of a new investment model within the competence of the Scottish Parliament.

SCOTLAND'S HIGH GROWTH SECTORS

No Government can predict with certainty the high growth industries of the future. What we must do is support those industries we already know are very well placed to make a very significant global contribution in the decades to come. Labour has defined those priority industries for Scotland as Life Sciences, Renewable Energy, Electronic Markets, Financial Services, Tourism and Food and Drink.

Life Sciences

Scotland is a world leader in life sciences. Thirty thousand people are already employed in this vital and growing sector in Scotland. Scottish Labour will invest further to support and expand our life science industry. Working with Scottish Enterprise and the Scottish Funding Council we will invest in the Life Sciences ITI and ensure even greater collaboration between universities, research institutes and the NHS.

Renewable Energy

Scottish Labour wants Scotland to be the green energy powerhouse of Europe. Scotland has met the first target to generate 18% of Scotland's electricity

from renewable sources five years early. Scottish Labour will now set a new target to generate 50% of our electricity from renewable energy technology by 2020.

We will work to make Scotland a world leader in new marine technologies, support the development of renewable heat technologies, make use of our vast biomass source in Scottish forests, promote better use of solar energy, hydrogen and bio-fuels, explore providing support for manufacturing clusters and support the creation of supply chains across Scotland to encourage the use of biomass for energy.

While onshore wind farms have been central to Scotland's success to date in expanding the proportion of electricity generated from renewable sources, we will seek to deliver a greater mix of renewable energy sources in the future.

We will invest in technology before it is market ready to ensure new sources of renewable energy in the future and we will work to attract the UK's proposed Energy Technology Institute to Aberdeen.

Scottish Labour will reform and speed up the electricity consents system so that good projects in the national interest can proceed more quickly following appropriate community consultation. At Westminster, Labour will introduce speedier connection

to the grid and ensure the costs of transmitting electricity from the sources of renewable energy will continue to be shared by consumers throughout the UK. We will examine further incentives to encourage marine renewables including, making effective use of the UK £50 million Marine Development Fund.

Scottish Labour will introduce new planning regulations to make it easier for people to install wind-turbines and solar panels and ensure new public sector buildings include micro-renewable energy wherever they can.

Scottish Labour will enable communities to take joint ownership of renewable energy and community developments.

Electronic Markets

Scotland's electronics industry has undergone enormous change in the last decade, and the industry that remains today is high tech and competitive. Scottish Labour will support electronics manufacturers, both home grown and from overseas.

The nature of the electronics industry is constantly changing, and today Scotland's strengths are in digital media, creative media and micro and opto electronics. Labour will support and invest in the basic science that provided the bedrock for these

industries and we will help promote their products and attract new investors into Scotland. We will continue to invest in the Electronics ITI.

Financial Services

Scotland's financial services sector is thriving and Scotland's position within the UK economy makes it very attractive to the financial industry to set up and expand here. The financial sector has grown by 36% in the past five years – a rate of growth twice the level of the UK as a whole – and now employs 220,000.

By implementing the strategy set out by the Financial Services Advisory Board, Scottish Labour will ensure the skills needs of the industry are met and improve industry links with further and higher education to support innovation. We will promote Scotland and the financial services industry, building on recent success in attracting high value jobs in the sector. In addition, we will attract fresh talent to Scotland, ensuring companies based in Scotland can access the best talent available.

Tourism

Scotland's tourism industry is thriving. Overseas visitor numbers are at an all time high and the industry has high potential for further growth. We want nothing less than

to be one of the world's foremost tourism destinations and to increase tourism revenues by 50% by 2015.

Labour's reforms to and investment in the national agency VisitScotland are making a remarkable impact on tourism numbers and the Scottish industry.

Recognising VisitScotland's worldwide success and expertise, we will transfer the responsibility for the overall promotion of Scotland out of the Scottish civil service and place it into VisitScotland.

Scotland is ahead of the game on eco-tourism and is currently ranked 9th in the world. Scottish Labour will encourage more companies to take part and get accredited through the Green Tourism Business Scheme.

Scottish Labour will build skills in the tourism industry and we will support training at all levels of the industry.

Scottish Labour created EventScotland to both attract high profile artistic and sporting events to Scotland, and to support local events and festivals. Scottish Labour will continue to support EventScotland, ensuring the organisation can support more local events and work to bring more major events to Scotland.

2007 is the Scottish Year of Highland Culture and with the 250th anniversary of Burns' birth taking place in 2009, Scottish Labour will capitalise on the potential cultural and economic benefits of these years.

Our national day - St Andrew's Day - is an opportunity to bring people together, regardless of social or cultural ancestry and will grow in significance in the years ahead. Scottish Labour will encourage employers to negotiate with trade unions to find ways they can allow employees to celebrate St Andrews day as a holiday. We will support national events that promote Scotland, whilst celebrating our many cultures.

Food and drink

Food & drink contributes £7.4 billion to the Scottish economy (with more than £2 billion in exports coming from Scotch whisky).

Labour will work in partnership with our UK colleagues to defend and promote Scotch whisky. We will also make full use of UK institutions and networks overseas to promote Scotland and Scottish products. We will support legislation to protect the status and definition of Scotch whisky.

Scotland's excellent raw materials from its farming and fishing industries, specialist food and drink producers, international

brands and strong research base has led to an industry with an international image and reputation.

Labour will support the Scottish farming industry by increasing the use of local, unprocessed and organic food in public sector catering, like schools and hospital meals, and we will continue our support for farmers markets. We will take action to tackle food poverty by further developing food hubs which support local producers. And we will support an increase in organic food production.

TOWNS AND CITIES

Scotland's cities are our economic powerhouse and we will harness their full economic potential.

Scottish Labour will ensure that planning reforms and city region plans link cities with their wider regions, creating better infrastructure, improved access to the job market and creating wealth across the regions to ensure all areas benefit.

We welcome and will support the growing collaboration between Glasgow and Edinburgh and the associated benefits this brings to the economy of Scotland as a whole. Labour's First Minister will convene

an annual summit of the city councils, public agencies and business communities of Glasgow and Edinburgh to help build a stronger coalition of interests for the benefit of the whole of Scotland.

Scottish Labour will ensure that the economic growth and renaissance we have brought to our cities is shared across Scotland's towns.

The town centre is the focal point of any town and a central part of people lives. It is where we shop, do business, meet others, socialise, and spend leisure time. It is important that people feel their town centre is clean, successful and safe. We will work to make Scotland's towns a place to live in, work and enjoy.

Labour will re-invigorate Scotland's town centres by creating new partnerships between public agencies and the small businesses at the heart of our town centres, with powers and resources to act. Town Centre Strategies will harness the ideas and innovation of local people. Wigtown has re-invented itself as a book town. West Kilbride is earning a reputation as a craft town.

Scottish Labour will:

- Establish Town Centre Trusts comprising key national and local stakeholders which will be tasked with developing local plans for town centre regeneration.
- Set up a new Town Centre Turnaround Fund. It will be administered like the Land Fund – a uniquely Scottish strand of funding secured by Donald Dewar, our first First Minister – so local communities can take ownership of derelict or rundown properties or land to refurbish or turn into new safe green space. It will refocus derelict building and contaminated land funds, Lottery funds, and historic and townscape heritage funds, to pump more investment into Scotland's small towns.
- Invest an initial £50 million into the Town Centre Turnaround, as a primer to attract other public and private funding.
- Give Trusts legal powers to initiate compulsory purchase orders, so CPOs can be used more easily and effectively to bring about dramatic change in town centres and high streets.
- Trusts will have the responsibility for small town Business Improvement Districts, in their town centres.
- Consult on extending the community right to buy to urban areas.

- Rebalance powers between landlord and tenants of small high streets shops to make it easier for an individual with a good business idea to set up in our high streets.
- Create new soft loan schemes for entrepreneurs and double small business rates relief which will support small shops and businesses in town centres.

GROWING SCOTLAND'S POPULATION

Scottish Labour is committed to encouraging people from the rest of the UK and across the world to come and live, work and study in Scotland.

Scottish Labour's Fresh Talent initiative has led the way in reversing over half a century of population decline by encouraging Scots back home, and attracting new migrants from both south of the border and the rest of the world.

For the last two years, in-migrants from the rest of the UK have exceeded out-migrants, in every age group. We are determined to build on this achievement and Scottish Labour will continue to attract highly skilled workers from all parts of the world.

We will further support schools and other public services in assisting those who do not speak English as a first language.

Scottish Labour will work with relevant trade unions in Scotland to do all we can to ensure that nobody in Scotland is exploited by unscrupulous landlords or exploitative employers.

Scottish Labour also recognises that recent arrivals can be among the most vulnerable and we want to support them to fully participate in Scottish life. We will continue to support those who flee persecution abroad to secure safety in the UK.

SCOTLAND'S ENERGY

Scottish Labour is committed to taking the long term decisions needed to give Scotland a mixed energy supply which will meet our energy needs, secure sustainable economic growth and ensure we give a lead to the world in tackling climate change. We are also committed to increased energy efficiency.

Labour's ambition is for Scotland to become Europe's capital for green energy, ensuring Scotland is the centre of Europe for expertise in renewable energy technology, manufacturing and generation.

Scottish Labour will adopt an energy policy that gives consideration to all sources of energy including renewable, nuclear, gas, coal and oil and we are committed to ensuring a safe and secure supply of electricity which is sustainable and affordable. Whilst we recognise there are ongoing concerns about different sources of energy generation, we will not rule out any single energy source, as this may risk both the security of our electricity supply and thousands of jobs across Scotland.

Scottish Labour will work to resolve how nuclear waste can be managed and disposed of safely. We will also look to how we can reduce our reliance on imported gas from overseas.

Scottish Labour will ensure that regulations attached to opencast mines are adhered to and enforced.

While Scotland's world class oil and gas industry is maturing, there remains 30 years of production in the UK continental shelf. Scottish Labour will support that industry through PILOT, the joint government / industry body.



BUILDING FUTURES

Scotland rightly prides itself on the high standards of our education system. With good quality schools, first class colleges and world-class universities, Scotland's success has been built on the learning and knowledge of its citizens. It is our greatest natural asset.

Scottish Labour has worked hard to develop and improve our education system. Education and learning has been a priority with sustained investment from pre-school children to adult learning. The biggest school building programme in Scotland's history is under way. Class sizes have fallen and there are nearly 2,000 more teachers in Scotland since devolution, supported by nearly 6,000 more teaching assistants and by August 2007 we will have 53,000 teachers in post. The performance of young Scots at the age of 15 in maths, literacy and science is among the best in the world. Nursery provision has been significantly extended. We have the highest proportion of young people going into higher education in the UK – and one of the highest levels in Europe.

But we can't afford to be complacent. Our competitors are investing heavily in the education of their population. They know, as we do, that education, skills and knowledge will be even more crucial to future prosperity

and success. We have to rise to this challenge. Scottish Labour's ambition is to build the best education system in the world.

We will step up our drive to equip our children with the skills they need and instil in them a love of learning. We will ensure all children have a good grounding in the basics, providing a wide and rich curriculum with more choices and opportunities to learn new languages, vocational skills, science and creative skills. We will build more world-class schools at a faster rate to improve the learning environment.

Scottish Labour's commitment to the modern comprehensive principle is rooted in our belief in a just and decent society. Every child should have the best education we can provide. We will ensure Scotland is a country where each pupil receives the teaching and support needed to reach their full potential. We will further reduce class sizes, improve teacher pupil ratios and increase support for teachers, particularly on discipline in the classroom.

We also know that the pace of change is accelerating. Those without skills will find life much harder in the future.

Skills and knowledge that might once have lasted a lifetime may only stay relevant for a few short years. We must look beyond the traditional idea that education ended when you left school or college to an era when we never stop learning and re-learning. This is a time to look outwards, not inwards.

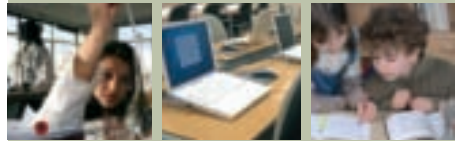
Continuous, high quality learning is Labour's strategy for Scotland's future.

Young Scots by the time they are 15 are amongst the world's best in literacy, numeracy and science. Only three countries significantly outperform us. Labour will build Scottish education so young Scots overtake those three countries, giving young Scots the best chance in the world to succeed in the global economy.

Labour's ambition is to build the best education system in the world by 2020.

- As our first priority for the next term of the Scottish Parliament, we will introduce an Education Bill within the first 100 days of government.
- We will make leaving school at 16 and 17 conditional on a young person staying meaningfully engaged in higher or further education, skills training, or full time volunteering.

- We will build the Skills Capital of Britain lifting skills levels throughout the Scottish working population.
- We will raise the status and value of vocational skills creating 100 skills academies so 14 – 18 year olds can learn high level skills.
- We will equip Scots with the globally useful skills of the future and we will invest in a radical expansion of languages and science throughout Scotland's education system.
- We will accelerate the school building programme and re-build 250 more Scottish schools in the next term of the Scottish Parliament.
- We will invest in the early years, improving health care and family support for our under 2s, expanding free early years education for our 3-5 year olds.
- We will increase the number of places in colleges and universities specifically increasing the number of science degrees and postgraduates.



Scottish Labour will introduce radical reforms to Scotland's education system backed up by significant extra resources. Investment in schools, colleges and universities, will increase every year

between now and 2011 by at least double the rate of inflation.

BUILDING STANDARDS, RAISING ASPIRATION

Raising the age of participation

Scottish Labour will end dropping out at 16. We will make leaving school before age 18 conditional on a young person staying meaningfully engaged in higher or further education, skills training, work or volunteering. 'Doing nothing' will not be an option for 16 and 17 year olds.

We will significantly expand the number of opportunities available to 16 and 17 year olds in order that every youngster has an array of opportunities available to them:

- We will create 100 skills academies to allow every youngster from age 14 the opportunity to learn new skills for work and gain vocational qualifications.
- We will expand the number of college and university places available to young Scots.
- We will expand Project Scotland, our national full time youth volunteering scheme.

- We will work with the Territorial Army in Scotland, to give 16 and 17 year olds the opportunity of being able to undertake residential courses to learn basic skills, including teamwork, leadership and general fitness – with no obligation to join the armed forces.

Building the basics

We will continue to build firm foundations for all with maths and literacy exams including setting a new standard grade in arithmetic and a similar new exam for literacy.

Our Curriculum for Excellence will create better learners in the education system helping them achieve greater and higher rates of attainment and ensuring education develops the whole child. Labour will build on Scotland's trusted qualifications system, and ensure the standards and integrity of exams and qualifications are at all times clearly understood by pupils, parents and employers.

Education is not just about opportunities in the class room. As part of our commitment to a qualifications system which recognises the wider achievements of pupils, Scottish Labour will create a National Citizenship Award to encourage the best personal attributes like volunteering, leadership,

teamwork and proficiency in life skills. This will stand alongside our internationally renowned academic qualifications.

Better Transitions

We will provide trained early years staff to work in partnership with teachers in primary 1 in our most deprived areas, so schools can benefit from their skills, to assist our most vulnerable young children in the transition to primary school.

Scottish Labour will also drive forward the fundamental changes needed in P1 to ensure children learn through purposeful play and active learning. Scottish Labour is committed to continuing professional development for all school staff.

To blur the division between secondary and primary, we will encourage more secondary school teachers to use their specialisms to teach in primary schools and more primary school teachers to use their approaches in secondary schools.

GLOBALLY USEFUL SKILLS FOR EVERY PUPIL

Young Scots must be equipped with skills and knowledge that will mark them out in the global economy. There are certain

subjects and skills that will undoubtedly be of economic, cultural and social worth in the future. So Scottish Labour will introduce radical reforms to ensure that young Scots have much greater opportunities to learn and excel in globally useful skills, and in particular languages and science.

Science and languages will be promoted to a much greater extent in Scottish schools. We will introduce a LABS (Languages and Basic Science) programme into every primary school:

- Scottish Labour will ensure all Scottish primary school children can access language tuition in school from primary 3 onwards.
- We will introduce 500 extra, modern language teachers and language assistants to teach languages, particularly in the languages of the future including Spanish and Mandarin in our primary schools.
- Scottish Labour will introduce more science teachers to assist in primary schools and we will improve the links between secondary and primary schools for science teaching.

Scottish Labour will create six Science Centres of Excellence for upper school pupils in local comprehensive schools,

aimed at stretching and inspiring more pupils to take Advanced Highers in science, whilst at the same time stretching their abilities.

There is one scientist in Scotland for every 100 people. We will establish a National Science Ambassadorial Programme and encourage Scotland's scientists to inspire a whole new generation to follow their lead and study science at advanced higher and degree level.

We will also give school children opportunities to learn in our university and college science laboratories by asking them to open up their excellent facilities to school pupils.

WORLD CLASS SCHOOLS FOR EVERY PUPIL

Every parent and pupil knows the importance of school buildings and their environment. World class schools help provide the best education. Scottish Labour has delivered the biggest school building programme ever seen in Scotland. In the first Parliament we built 120 new and refurbished schools. Between 2003 and this election, we have built 200 more.

We will now accelerate progress and, in the next parliament, Scottish Labour will build

a further 250 new and refurbished schools with at least 100 new schools completed by 2009.

Scottish Labour will continue to improve our learning environment in school. Our aim is to have all new schools being carbon neutral buildings. We will also improve playgrounds and invest in better play and sports equipment. We will encourage every school to be an eco school and work to ensure all have "green flag status".

SUPPORTING CHOICES FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Diversity

Schools of Ambition are schools that have demonstrated flair and imagination and have won the right to have additional resources and support, to develop an important way of raising the aspiration of schools. We will expand the number of Schools of Ambition and we will further encourage partnerships between public, private and voluntary sectors to establish Schools of Ambition in drama, sport and other areas.

Scottish Labour will continue to support partnerships between schools, business and charities to bring fresh ideas and new approaches into schools.

Labour is determined to see more variety on offer for pupils, both within the school day and outwith it. We are aiming for all children in primary school to undertake at least 2 hours of physical education per week. We will further expand our active schools programme and ensure more pupils participate in sport, including competitive sports throughout primary and secondary school.

We will expand the youth music initiative further, whereby all Scottish pupils enjoy musical tuition by Primary 6. We will invest further to allow pupils to carry on with their music into secondary school.

We will expand our support for Gaelic medium schools. Scottish Labour will also create more opportunities for Gaelic learners and widen Gaelic education. We will also increase the number of Gaelic medium teachers.

Scottish Labour will continue to support denominational and non-denominational schools. We will support parents' wishes and provide choice for parents and pupils.

Determined to Succeed

Determined to Succeed is the most comprehensive enterprise education programme in Europe, teaching young Scots skills such as teamwork and initiative.

We will build on the success of DtS and broaden its reach. We will also continue to support the work of the Co-operative Education Trust which is equipping children with new skills and ideas through the DtS programme.

Parental support

The more parents are involved with their children, the better the life chances their children will have. Labour will increase support to all parents and guardians, reaching those who need it most. But in return, we expect parents to play their part in supporting their children and preventing anti social behaviour.

- Scottish Labour will introduce contracts between the schools and parents and we will work to embed a clear understanding for all parents of what is expected of them and their children and what the schools undertake to do.
- We will set up a Homework Support Service, which will be staffed by experienced teachers.
- We will improve and integrate national parenting programmes to ensure families receive support.

WORLD CLASS TEACHING IN SMALLER CLASSES

Smaller class sizes allow individualised learning and improve discipline. They will allow teachers to stretch those children doing well and support those needing extra help.

We have reduced class sizes in primary schools to 30 pupils or less and later this year we will reduce P1 to a maximum of 25 per class and to a maximum of 20 per class in Maths and English for S1 and S2.

Scottish Labour will reduce class sizes year on year and improve pupil / teacher ratios.

We will agree, early in the new Parliament, a detailed plan to bring class sizes in Scottish schools below the OECD average and keep them there.

Scottish Labour guarantees to have, and to retain for the future, at least 53,000 fully-trained teachers by the start of the new school year.

There can be no greater responsibility than teaching the next generation. Scottish Labour has brought respect and stability back to teaching. Average salaries have increased by more than 30% since 1999. There is better leadership, better training

and more professional freedoms. More people and young people in particular see teaching as a rewarding career and these new teachers are meeting the highest standards ever.

Scottish Labour will continue to open new routes into teaching and we will provide teachers with the support staff they need.

We will continue to support and monitor the 2001 teachers' agreement on pay and conditions and we expect improving professional standards in return.

As part of our guarantee to parents that standards will be maintained and improved, Scottish Labour will expand the remit of HMIE to work with schools and local authorities.

Scottish Labour will reform and give additional powers to the General Teaching Council for Scotland to act as the national teaching standards agency, so it will play a bigger role in setting teacher and head-teacher standards, developing teachers and head-teachers and ensuring standards are effectively monitored and maintained.

Scottish Labour has delivered a significant expansion in the number of support staff in our schools, with more classroom assistants, learning support staff, auxiliaries, school bursars and

administrative support. They have all played a crucial role in improving education standards in Scotland.

We will establish a task force which will include trade unions and local authorities charged with reporting to ministers by May 2008 on the further steps needed to gain stronger recognition and integration of the work of school support staff. We will also explore how to improve their qualifications, career pathways and personal development and consider the potential implications of this work for pay and conditions.

BETTER BEHAVIOUR

Every pupil has the right to learn without disruption from others. No teacher or pupil should be subject to abuse or disrespect. Scottish Labour supports the right of teachers to teach and young people to learn in a disciplined environment. Bullying, violence, anti social behaviour, low level disruption and indiscipline are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Building on the work of the national Discipline Taskforce, we will introduce a National Respect and Responsibility Programme in our schools:

- Scottish Labour will specify in legislation the framework for a Discipline Code in every school to set out rights and responsibilities for head teachers, teachers, pupils and parents.
- We will legislate to put beyond doubt the authority of head teachers to exclude pupils and maintain discipline.
- We will introduce 'Parent / School Contracts' so parents know what they can expect from schools and in return parents know what is expected of them by schools and we will insist that parents face up to their side of the bargain by supporting their children and taking responsibility for their behaviour.
- We will expand our home link workers in areas of highest need. They will be a bridge between the home and the school to help children who are struggling and support families facing difficulties.
- We will expand and fund additional designated places to support disruptive pupils and to protect other children. We will fund a range of initiatives to deal with behavioural problems including "chill out zones" and "pit stops". We will also expand offsite units which moderate children's behaviour and reintegration into schools.
- We will encourage intergeneration links, and support Scotland's older people in volunteering to provide mentoring and guidance to school pupils, helping to build respect between generations.

- School uniforms help to raise standards and create a positive ethos within the school. Scottish Labour will encourage all schools to set dress codes.

Bad behaviour does not just cause disruption in the classroom. Building on the success of the community warden scheme Scottish Labour will create school wardens in areas where there are problems. Their responsibilities will be to improve safety and security for pupils on the way to and from school, in and around schools in the mornings, at lunchtime and at the end of the school day. They will also make links with neighbourhood wardens and community police to ensure that safety and good behaviour is the norm.

FIRST CLASS COLLEGES AND WORLD CLASS UNIVERSITIES

While Scottish Labour has been investing in Scotland's colleges and universities other countries are doing the same. We cannot stand still or Scotland will fall behind. We must invest in high skills because Scotland has no future as a low skill economy.

Our ambition is to lead the world in new industries and technologies, with highly

skilled jobs. We want our young people to be brimming with the confidence and skills to compete in an increasingly competitive world throughout their lives.

We have already seen real progress. The proportion of the workforce with degrees has risen from 14% in 1997 to 23%. Scottish Labour is committed to raising that figure to 50% by 2020.

Colleges

New modern colleges significantly improve application rates and reduce drop out rates. They are at the heart of widening access – whether it be for mature and returning students, those seeking to combine study with work or parenthood, to improve grades from school or learn a trade. Labour has acted to raise the status of further education, and will never regard colleges as an afterthought in education policy.

Labour will invest further in the further education college estate, creating first class learning facilities in the heart of local communities.

Scottish Labour will offer new opportunities to allow more people to study part-time and take up distance learning courses. We will improve access to part time study, initially with a full review of part-time student financial support.

Universities

Scottish Labour has increased funding for universities, including a 400% increase in their capital budgets to modernise buildings and equipment, and we will continue to invest to keep our universities world class and internationally competitive.

For the first time in nearly a decade, Scottish Labour will raise the cap on student numbers in Scottish higher education.

We will work with university principals to ensure that a fair proportion of students from Scottish schools can access these new places and that there is a significant increase in the numbers of young Scots studying science and technology at undergraduate and post graduate level.

Scottish Labour will also ensure increased funding brings a further widening of access to higher education and we will make widening access to higher education a central part of our education programme in the next parliament.

We will create new university schools, twinning our universities with secondary schools in our most deprived areas to raise the aspirations of our brightest children no matter what their background.

Scottish Labour will not introduce top up tuition fees. Labour remains committed to the graduate endowment as a means of financing young people from the poorest families to study in higher education.

To continue to help students meet the day to day costs of studying in higher education, Scottish Labour will raise the amount of the student loan available to each student. We will build upon the introduction of student bursary grants and educational maintenance allowances to support those whose financial position might discourage them from continuing in education.

Scottish Labour is committed to helping Scottish universities find new and alternative revenue streams including business and alumni.

A SUNRISE AGENDA

Labour in Scotland introduced universal free early years education, and it is a source of pride that almost all children take advantage of this revolution in Scottish education. It is having a positive and enduring benefit on Scotland's young children, their future prospects and their families' aspirations.

Early years education prepares children for later learning, building their confidence, fostering a love of learning and encouraging

them in learning how to learn. It supports children from poorer backgrounds, raising aspirations and allowing services to intervene early with any problems. And it provides choices to families helping them to balance work and family life.

3- 5 year olds

Scottish Labour will expand the number of free hours of early years education from 12.5 hours per week to 15 hours per week; we will also expand the number of weeks in which children receive free nursery education from 35 to 38 weeks per year.

Giving parents more choice and flexibility over early years entitlement has the potential to make a huge difference for parents who work part-time, flexible hours or shift work. Scottish Labour will ensure we have a range of providers in the public, private and voluntary sectors and will give parents more flexibility and choice about when they use their free entitlement to early years education.

Scottish Labour will continue to improve the quality of nurseries and improve the quality of children's early years experience.

Nursery staff and teachers play a crucial role in improving quality of experience.

Scottish Labour will improve the quality of care for children by starting the process of substantially improving the qualifications, career structure and rewards for early years and childcare workers. By 2011 we will ensure that every early years and childcare facility will be led by an Early Years professional.

Giving the youngest children the best start in life

Children thrive on the love and support of parents and Labour will continue to support families, especially those with very young children. Paid maternity leave has been increased by Labour from just 13 weeks in 1997 to 39 weeks – a huge step towards the goal of a full year. Thousands of parents in Scotland are also taking advantage of rights, brought in by Labour, to paternity leave and to ask for flexible working.

Early years education and extra support has its biggest impact on vulnerable children.

Scottish Labour will expand nursery education for 10,000 two year olds who need it the most by providing high quality care and learning opportunities to support their development and future learning.

We will reform Surestart, merge it with Working for Families programmes and create a “Sunrise” fund to better deliver services targeted to improving the life chances for young children and their families.

Scottish Labour will continue to focus more resources on our families with young children and reform Surestart to ensure it delivers greater benefits for our youngest children. We will expand health visitor services such as the Starting Well scheme. We will also further develop pioneering initiatives such as “nurture classes” for vulnerable young children.

Play and out of school activities

Scottish Labour’s vision is that all young children have the opportunity to choose at least one structured and organised out of school hours activity to participate in on a regular basis.

Scottish Labour will help parents who need high quality childcare support by providing places where children can learn new interests and skills, keep fit and active, and receive help with homework.

We will increase investment in breakfast clubs, increase after school children’s clubs, and open school buildings for the

community to use. We will expand wrap around care within schools, 8am to 6pm for primary children.

We will build or improve new play parks, improve school play grounds, widen access to our safe green space, and invest in structured activities for all children and families to enjoy playing together, such as play@home.

PROTECTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Children with additional needs

Scottish Labour supports the availability of choice between special school and support in mainstream schools for children with additional needs. We will give head teachers budgets to help them mainstream children with additional needs into their schools. We will continue to provide additional support for children with special needs, including emphasis on early detection of conditions.

We will keep under close review the need to focus resources on children for whom English is a second language. In particular we will give special emphasis to those schools which have to cope with a large influx of children who do not speak English.

Looked after children

Looked after children are amongst the most vulnerable and at risk children in Scotland. Scottish Labour will continue to increase the support for children in and leaving care. We are committed to building more stability in their lives and providing a decent education for all children as we believe it is the foundation for them to prosper.

Wherever possible children who cannot live in their own family home should be placed in foster homes, and when appropriate adopted by loving caring families. We will seek to recruit more foster carers and ensure they are properly and more consistently supported with improvements in allowances.

Scottish Labour will ensure that every child in care has a named person who will help them to receive the most from mainstream services including raising their educational outcomes and ensuring their health needs are met.

We will raise the age from 16 to 18 where the state will continue to look after children when, for whatever reason, their parents can't. We will also work with local authorities and others to continue flexible individualised support and

accommodation for those brought up in care up until they reach 25.

We will also ensure higher standards of care for children in residential care.

Child Protection

Scottish Labour has driven forward a fundamental reform of child protection and we will continue with this. We will reform children's hearings and youth justice to protect children from harm, focusing resources on our most vulnerable children.

Labour will build upon the work already implemented to integrate children's services, but we will go much further in the next term of the Scottish Parliament. Labour will create a statutory duty for all public agencies with responsibility for children to share information in the interests of protecting the child.

We will invest to raise professional standards in social work.

By implementing the Changing Lives report into 21st Century Social Work, we will ensure all staff are better managed, supported, equipped and empowered to undertake their difficult tasks.



**BUILDING
SAFER
COMMUNITIES**

Four years ago Scottish Labour promised more police, more community wardens, a crack down on anti-social behaviour, new youth courts, the biggest top to bottom reform of our court system in generations, better support for victims, clarity in sentencing and an end to automatic early release.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is essential to improving quality of life and building strong, safe communities. Scottish Labour has put in place the investment and reforms needed to protect people from crime, support victims and make justice quicker and more effective.

Scotland under the Tories saw crime double and the number of police officers fall. Public confidence in a criminal justice system plagued by delays was under threat.

Today Scotland has a record number of police officers, with 1,500 more officers than in 1999. Every force has seen an increase in strength. It helps explain why crime is falling, including violent crime, and clear up rates are now higher than ever. There are now some 20,000 fewer crimes recorded by the police while clear-up rates have improved by 25% since 1997.

There is a new focus, too, on both the most serious crimes and low-level disorder which blight too many communities.

The Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement agency has been expanded and given new resources and powers. At the same time, the increased number of police, community wardens and extra support staff have expanded the uniformed presence on our streets. Communities throughout Scotland are increasingly using the new powers to tackle anti-social behaviour.

These improvements have been coupled with wider reforms of the criminal justice system, tackling court delays, reducing the need for unnecessary witnesses and ending the automatic early release of prisoners.

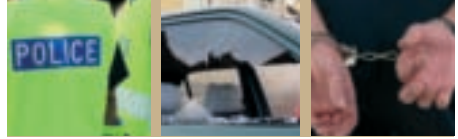
The challenge remains, however, how to target the most serious crimes and criminals while also making sure we continue to improve life in communities across Scotland by tackling less serious crime and disorder. Scottish Labour is determined to build on the progress so far in both these areas. So we will ensure that the police have the necessary powers to catch and convict serious and violent criminals. We will make full use of technological advances and improve, rather than reduce, co-operation with police forces in England to bring the criminal gangs operating both sides of the border to justice.

At the same time, we will put more emphasis on community policing, devolving more power, and increasing accountability, to local people so that the police and criminal justice system continue to reflect their priorities. We will step up our efforts to support victims, be ready to take tougher action against the minority whose anti-social behaviour can make life a misery for the overwhelming majority of decent Scottish families and make offenders repay their debt to the community.

We will:

- Establish a community police team in every area in Scotland and double the community wardens.
- We will name and shame people who cause chaos in their neighbourhoods.
- Invest even more of the proceeds of crime in community activities especially for young people.
- Ensure that tough new community justice programmes are in place to make offenders pay something back to the community.
- Introduce a range of new powers for police to tackle both national and international serious and organised crime.
- Increase police powers and make full use of advances in technology to fight crime.

- Make public the identities of predatory sex offenders whose behaviour is causing concern.
- Set up a Sentencing Guidelines Council to ensure consistency in sentencing.



POLICE

With Labour, police numbers have increased in every police force in Scotland, and all forces have additional support staff. We have recruited new Special Constables, and made better use of their valuable efforts. Community wardens are in place in every local authority, responding to community needs and backing up the police in tackling neighbourhood crime.

Communities want police and community wardens visible on their streets. But they also want to be confident that serious crime is being tackled. Scottish Labour will support the police in fighting serious, violent, sexual and organised crime as well as in dealing with much more common low level crime and disorder.

Scottish Labour will put public safety first and ensure Scottish Police do not fall

behind our UK counterparts and be asked to fight crime with one hand behind their backs. Scottish Labour will give police the necessary powers to ensure we maximise the opportunities to catch and convict criminals. Scottish Labour will:

- introduce new police powers to fight serious gangland criminals
- retain DNA samples and fingerprints of all crime suspects, to help convict the guilty and acquit the innocent.

Scottish Labour will continue to free up police time to increase front line police on our streets to catch criminals, deter crime and reassure the public. We will continue with our successful court reforms so police do not waste time waiting to give evidence in courts unnecessarily, and by increase support staff.

Scottish Labour will consider reform of police and fire boards within our wider plans for public service reform, to make them more relevant to the communities they serve and give them the powers and responsibilities to hold services to account.

We have seen a welcome increase in co-operation and working between police forces and other law and order agencies but we need to do more. Scottish Labour

believes that there are areas where a co-ordinated national approach across police force boundaries is required. We will examine existing structures to see how this can best be achieved.

We will review the duties and responsibilities of Scotland's Police Forces, as laid out in the Police (Scotland) Act - and introduce appropriate legislation to ensure that the legislation is fit for purpose in the 21st century.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

Communities are safer when police officers and those who support them work closely with local people and are known and visible in their local areas.

Building on the success of our community warden schemes, Scottish Labour will:

- Require community police teams to operate in every area of Scotland. Each team will include a named senior police officer who will report to the community they serve.
- Double the number of community wardens nationwide to over 1000 and put them at the heart of community led policing, ensuring their long term funding and that they work flexibly so

they can be around when and where they are most needed.

- Introduce Police Community Support Officers to back up the work of the British Transport Police.
- Expand the junior community warden scheme.
- Expand environmental wardens, who will be responsible for environmental justice, dealing with litter, graffiti and dog fouling.

Scottish Labour will build on the reforms of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and introduce named community prosecutors for every area of Scotland who will liaise with, and report to the community on prosecutions in their area. Scottish Labour will expand the Public Defender scheme to cover the whole of Scotland by 2011.

Fighting crime and creating safer communities is not just for the police. We will designate a statutory body in local communities responsible for reducing crime.

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Scottish Labour stands firmly on the side of the law abiding majority. When people

opposed ASB measures we made them face up to the realities that too many hard working communities face.

The police and other agencies are now using the new powers. There are now double the number of Anti Social Behaviour Orders compared with two years ago, Dispersal Orders work and people want to see them used more often, Closure Orders are giving people respite, boy racers are having their cars seized and noisy neighbours are being fined for ignoring warnings. Where they are being used fully and effectively, they are helping to transform the quality of life in communities.

It is not acceptable that any authority or agency takes a blanket decision not to use the powers. They have to take action against anti social behaviour. We will take steps to ensure all communities are protected from the misery of bad and anti social behaviour.

Scottish Labour will learn from the positive experiences in Manchester where victims are put first and quick action is taken on those who are involved in anti social behaviour.

We will take steps to name and shame people who cause chaos in their neighbourhoods, ensuring that victims of anti social behaviour are told what action

has been taken and what restrictions have been put against the offender.

We will ensure that ministers have powers to direct agencies and local authorities to act. We will speed up court processes and fast track systems for ASBOs.

Scottish Labour will invest even more of the proceeds of crime in community activities such as midnight football leagues, twilight basket ball and other youth facilities and in community resources like CCTV, CCTV mobile vans, and fences for private and community property. We will continue to plough a greater share of the assets seized from drug or other serious crimes into those communities which have suffered most from these criminal activities.

YOUTH JUSTICE

Scottish Labour has significantly increased investment into services to divert young people from crime, and to work with those who persistently offend. Around one in 500 young people are identified as a persistent problem – the equivalent of one or two pupils in every secondary school. But these persistent offenders cause a disproportionate amount of trouble for communities as well as blighting their own futures. We will take swift robust action to deal with this minority of young people who

are bent on making the lives of others a misery in Scotland.

Scotland has a unique child welfare system and we are committed to the founding principles of the children's hearing system. We will, however, reform and modernise children hearings and the wider youth justice system in order to confront and deal more effectively with persistent and serious offending behaviour both to help the young people themselves and to improve protection for the public.

We will ensure that intervention is made at an early stage to divert young people from offending. But we will take further steps to change the behaviour of those young people who are persistent or serious offenders, including expanded use of intensive support and electronic monitoring. We will provide for the option of referral to youth courts for youngsters who commit violent and repeat offences.

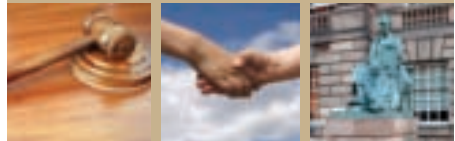
Scottish Labour created youth courts in Hamilton and Airdrie. Building on their success, we will establish further youth courts in Kilmarnock, Paisley and Dundee, and consider how best to ensure that the youth court approach is used more widely across Scotland.

PAYBACK

Scottish Labour will establish Scotland's first Community Justice Centre in Glasgow and a National Payback system. Building on the problem-solving approach of our successful drugs and youth courts, we will ensure tough new community justice programmes are in place to deal with low level high volume crime. Communities must see visible payback to the areas offenders have damaged. Labour will

- Involve communities in setting their priorities for pay back: cleaning up litter, repairing damage to property in an area, providing services to vulnerable people, or building community facilities.
- Ensure community sentences are available to set offenders to work on these priorities.
- Streamline community sentences to make clear what offenders pay back.
- Introduce measures where offenders will be immediately set to work when given a community sentence.
- Give offenders the chance to change through insisting on them attending drug rehabilitation, back to work or literacy programmes.
- Community enforcement officers will ensure that offenders turn up and carry out their sentences.

- Community courts will report back to local communities informing them of the work carried out in their area, what priorities have been set for the future, and how ordinary people can influence what work is carried out.
- Community courts will explain their decisions and will do more to inform the victim and public about court decisions. For example, each community court will have a website listing cases and their outcomes.



PRISONS AND SENTENCING

We will not shy away from building the prisons we need to ensure public safety, to punish serious and persistent offenders and to provide respite to communities. But we will also ensure that prison is used appropriately, for example, using supervised attendance orders for fine defaulters. We will examine what further steps need to be taken to deal with the problems of drugs in our prisons and what more we can do to reduce re-offending. We have invested to improve the prison estate and to end slopping out.

Scottish Labour will bring forward a Judicial Appointments Bill to reform the way we appoint and dismiss our judges as well examining how we can equip judges with the specialist skills they may need to handle specific issues.

Scottish Labour is committed to improving transparency and consistency in sentencing. Scottish Labour will establish a judicially led Sentencing Guidelines Council to set out clear sentencing guidelines for judges and courts to use across the country to bring more consistency to sentencing. We will expect judges to give reasons for decisions so victims and the public all know what the sentence is and the offender knows what is expected of them and why.

The sentencing guidelines will ensure consistency in sentences that take account of aggravated factors such as racism, sectarianism and other hate crimes.

Those who have committed serious offences can expect serious sentences. We will focus resources on first time offenders to make them face up to the consequences of their crimes, especially violent crime, and equip them with the skills to ensure the first time they go to prison is their last. We will use licence conditions and Home Detention Curfews to ensure that offenders continue to

address their problems while re-integrating into the community.

PARENTING

All parents find it difficult from time to time. If we want parents to take responsibility for their children, we must provide the support when they need it. Scottish Labour will offer more parenting support but we will expect parents to take responsibility for their children in return.

We will continue to improve information for parents on good parenting, we will expand parenting classes and build on the successful Dundee Families Support Project, with similar projects in other areas of Scotland.

Scottish Labour also expects parenting orders to be used where necessary and we will introduce contracts with parents with compulsory measures where this is needed in the best interests of children.

TACKLING SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME

Labour will work in partnership between Holyrood and Westminster to disrupt serious and organised crime and bring those behind it to justice. Labour in

Westminster will co-operate and share surveillance intelligence, giving the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency access to the UK network of 130 SOCA liaison network officers, working in up to 40 countries on all aspects of organised crime so that they can share their intelligence and expertise.

Scottish Labour will introduce a Serious and Organised Crime Bill to secure a range of new powers designed to make it easier to fight crime across the Scotland/England border and internationally, making it easier for the police and security services to operate across the border and to share intelligence and surveillance.

The Scottish Crime and Drugs Enforcement Agency, set up by Labour, is now tackling organised crime across Scotland, and often across national and international borders. Scottish Labour will build a new 'Crime Campus', bringing Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency together under one roof with other law enforcement agencies, to build a world class centre of excellence for fighting organised crime. And we'll give the police powers they need to protect the public from dangerous gangland criminals.

Scottish Labour's Serious and Organised Crime Bill will create:

- new Violent Offender Orders with extra powers for courts to place restrictions on where violent offenders can live and preventing them from associating with particular individuals or organisations.
- new Serious Crime Prevention Orders targeted at organised criminals and the markets that they operate in.
- new powers to allow public bodies to share information with anti-fraud organisations to help spot activity and individuals linked to suspected frauds.
- new powers to seize assets and the proceeds of crime, including preventing criminals from profiting from their memoirs or accounts of their crimes;
- more effective action to seize the assets from low-level, but high volume crime.
- new investigation powers so that a surveillance operation that begins in England can continue if the suspects move to Scotland and to make it easier for surveillance operations to be authorised where the crimes spread across a number of police force areas.
- the powers of arrest for immigration officers working in Scottish points of entry.

Civil Contingencies and national security

Scottish Labour will not compromise our national security. Terrorism, organised and violent crime have no respect for borders and we will play our full part in protecting Scotland and the UK.

Scottish Labour will ensure that all local authorities have appropriate contingency plans in place in preparation for any national emergency.

Scottish Labour will ensure that our police forces, fire and rescue services and other front line responders have the necessary resources and are equipped to work with our UK armed forces and other UK emergency services so we are fully prepared for any national emergency or attack on Scotland.

Scottish Labour will continue to work closely with the UK Labour Government to ensure our borders are protected.

Labour has already invested in our fire and rescue services to ensure that we have a modern legislative framework and up to date equipment. We will further ensure all fire and rescue Services are equipped with the new Firelink radio system and implement further improvements as necessary.

SEX CRIME AND SEX OFFENDERS

Labour has led the way in toughening up the monitoring of sex offenders. Public safety is paramount in the management of sex offenders and we will continue to ensure the needs of victims and their families are taken into account when decisions are made about their release at the end of prison sentences. We will also improve the process of preparation for release of the offender to re-balance the interests of public safety and rehabilitation. We will legislate for agencies to share information when a child is at risk and introduce new arrangements making public the identities of predatory sex offenders whose behaviour is causing concern.

Scottish Labour will tackle the unacceptable levels of rape convictions. We recognise that the current laws and framework need updating to reflect sexual offending in the 21st century. We will act on the recommendations of the Scottish Law Commission and consider whether legislation on corroboration of evidence in cases of rape and sexual offending requires to be improved to allow the court to take into account the wider circumstance of the offence. And we will consider reforming the definition of rape to ensure that all victims of serious sexual offences are protected by the law.

DRUGS POLICY

We have made real progress in getting people with serious drug problems into treatment and there is strong evidence that this has played a big part in Scotland seeing significant declines in drug related crimes like housebreaking. But Scottish Labour believes we must do more to get people to stay off drugs permanently.

Scottish Labour will create a National Drug Free Lives Unit within the centre of the devolved government which will set national priorities for preventative, educational and rehabilitation services. Drugs policy will be driven by a Cabinet Minister and we will reform Drug Action Teams to ensure that local services deliver on national priorities. Funding will be streamlined to ensure we reduce bureaucracy and get more resources to front line services.

Drugs education will be radically improved, and we will build on what has an impact on young people – including using ex-drug users in educational programmes where this is appropriate.

Strong enforcement of the law will remain a central part of our strategy to tackle drugs, and the Scottish Crime and Drugs Enforcement Agency will continue to have

have a key role to play, linking with UK and international law enforcement agencies.

We will make it easier to seize assets using the Proceeds of Crime Act and we will direct more drug dealers, money to be re-invested in those local communities hardest hit by drugs. Working with Crimestoppers we will continue our high profile Drug Dealers Don't Care campaign.

We will continue to provide a wide range of effective drug treatments that are tailored to the needs of the individual. No one treatment provides the solution in all circumstances. We will evaluate and improve both residential and community based drug rehabilitation services.

The interests of children in those families using drugs must come first. Scottish Labour will ensure all services have a responsibility towards children.

We will expand residential services especially for women who have children, building on the positive work undertaken by 218 Time Out Centre and the voluntary sector.

We believe that the best outcome for children is for parents to live drug free lives and we will work to ensure more addicts successfully complete treatment.

We will use drug testing to ensure drug

users are meeting their obligations and consider making them mandatory.

We will improve family planning services for drug misusers. We will create rehabilitation places specifically for women and their children to allow children to be cared for while the mother undergoes treatment and rehabilitation.

We will not shy away from taking hard decisions where children need to be removed from drug misusing parents for their own safety and wellbeing. We recognise that the wider family is often critical in getting drug misusers into treatment and sustaining their progress. We will ensure that the needs of the wider family are taken account in treatment and rehabilitation programmes.

VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS

Labour is committed to building on the success of the Violence Reduction Unit to reduce the culture of violence in Scotland whether on our streets, at football matches or in the home. We will give the police all the powers they need to tackle violence but we will also challenge the root causes of this violence. We have introduced football banning orders and we will work with Westminster to ensure that there are

reciprocal arrangements to enforce banning orders north and south of the border.

We have made considerable progress in tackling sectarianism and will implement the Anti Sectarianism Action Plan drawn up following the First Minister's summit on sectarianism.

Too many young lives have been scared for life by crime. Labour led the way in tackling knife crime, giving police additional powers to stop and search those suspected of carrying knives. We have doubled the sentences for those convicted and introduced a licensing scheme for the sale of non-domestic knives.

We have provided the police with additional resources including hand held metal detectors, and supported a national knives amnesty.

We will ensure the new legislation is fully implemented and keep it under review and consider whether further measures are needed to tackle the booze and blade culture.

We have also tightened the law on the purchase and misuse of airguns. Working with the police we will build on the successful 'hand in' scheme to take air weapons out of circulation and will keep under review whether there should be a total ban on airguns.

VICTIMS

Labour has radically improved services for victims and this has been widely recognised. Scottish Labour will ensure both victims of crime and the public are better informed about court decisions. We will make more use of Victim Statements to allow courts to hear directly from victims what the impact of crime has been on them. Scottish Labour will continue to improve services for victims of crime and improve court procedures to support them. Scottish Labour will:

- Ensure that more victims are able to join the victim notification scheme.
- Give more victims the chance to make a victim impact statement in court.
- Ensure better use of direct compensation for victims of property crime for example.
- Improve information given to victims through victim reports.
- Improve how this information is made available to the public.
- Continue to drive forward reforms to ensure we seize assets, compensation payments and windfall payments from offenders to benefit victims.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is a serious crime. We will learn from the experience of the domestic violence courts to improve court practices where necessary and establish perpetrator programmes to ensure those guilty are not only punished but must face up to their behaviour.

We will review the effect of current enforcement measures to tackle violence against women. We will look to strengthen court orders, security and protection for women including those who do not want to move from their own home or community. We will focus resources on the children who are being brought up in violent families. Scottish Labour will seek to work with employers to develop and implement effective initiatives and procedures in the workplace to support those suffering domestic violence.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Scottish Labour has carried out a top to bottom reform of the criminal justice system. We now need to adopt the same thorough approach to Scotland's civil justice system, to speed up civil justice, making it fairer, accessible and more effective.

Scottish Labour will improve access to justice by creating better integration of advice and information services and extending and developing law centres. We also believe that many more disputes can be resolved without going to court, whether in family law or commercial disputes.

We will improve the small claims procedure in our courts and introduce an Arbitration Bill.

Scottish Labour will improve both criminal and civil legal aid so that is effective, supports individuals and provides equal access to the law. In particular, we will focus on improving practice where there are disputes over parental access to children, giving priority to the child's needs and child's safety. We will ensure there is equality of access to legal aid in such situations.

PROTECTION AT WORK

Labour in the Scottish Parliament and Westminster are working closely with employers, unions and health and safety experts to ensure we have appropriate corporate manslaughter / corporate homicide legislation for Scotland.

Labour led the way in legislating to give emergency workers the respect and protection they deserve, we will keep this legislation under review and extend our 'safe at work' initiatives to encourage all employers including the public sector to minimise the risk of violence to staff.

We believe personal injury cases need to be dealt with in a manner which recognises the sensitivity and complexity of the cases and these cases should retain the right of access to the Court of Session. We are committed to looking at how the present system can be improved to ensure that those who suffer injuries are not disadvantaged and that court processes and procedures should be more effective in reaching early resolution.



**BUILDING
A HEALTHIER
SCOTLAND**



Health care across Scotland has never been better. Working with skilled and dedicated health staff, Scottish Labour is transforming the NHS to treat ill health better and to promote good health.

When Labour came to power, Scotland's health service was suffering badly from years of under-funding. Hospitals were short of staff, delays for treatment were long. Too little effort had been put into tackling Scotland's chronic health problems.

Scottish Labour has worked hard to put that right. Spending per head on health has doubled in Scotland and is now at record levels. There are nearly 700 extra doctors and over 5,000 extra nurses with higher pay and improved conditions throughout the NHS since devolution. Hundreds of millions of pounds have been invested in new hospitals and new GP surgeries. The result is faster, better treatment for patients.

Waiting times are the lowest ever despite a big increase in operations. The number of cataract operations are up by 38%, the number of knee replacements by nearly 80%. There has been remarkable progress in tackling Scotland's big killers.

Deaths among the under-75s from cancer are down 15% since 1997, from strokes by 40% and from heart disease by 45%.

There is a new focus on promoting healthier lifestyles, ending health inequalities and improving mental health. The ban on smoking in public places is universally accepted and will save lives.

Now we want to step up progress so we can make full use of the advances in medical knowledge and treatments. Scottish Labour promise to continue increasing capacity, to invest more in preventative care, to give patients more choice over treatment and encourage services to work together better to meet patients' needs. We will continue with the bold and radical steps needed to improve health in Scotland and tackle our deep-rooted health inequalities.

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT AND HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Scottish Labour's approach to health and health improvement is driven by our core values of social justice and opportunity for all. Our vision is of a Scotland where families can live healthier, happier lives together for longer. We want to help people stay healthy with the support of a world class NHS if they fall ill. Our approach to all other aspects of health and health care is underpinned by our determination to improve Scotland's health and reduce health inequalities.

Scottish Labour will take the bold decisions needed to improve the health of everyone in Scotland. Our drive to end child poverty, achieve full employment, improve housing and regenerate deprived communities is also vital to improving Scotland's health. Health cannot be tackled in isolation.

Scottish Labour will continue to champion public health across devolved government and will tackle Scotland's big challenges: obesity, poor diet, inactive lifestyles, alcohol and substance misuse, and smoking.

We will tackle the underlying causes of ill health and work to ensure the healthy choice becomes the easy choice for everyone in Scotland.

We know, for example, that men on low incomes are amongst those least likely to visit a doctor. Scottish Labour will introduce a free full health check for men aged 40 and expand walk in centres across Scotland to allow easier access to health services for all.

Building on the success of the Keep Well initiative, Scottish Labour will ensure targeted health advice and support already provided for the more deprived communities is extended across the country. We will also work with Co-operative Development Scotland to build on the success of community co-ops in connecting people to the health services they need.

Despite real progress, cancer still casts a dark shadow over Scotland. We have improved prevention through, for example, increased screening for cervical cancer and are tackling underlying causes through measures such as the smoking ban. Scottish Labour believe there is much more we need to do to reduce cancers in Scotland.

We will work closely with the full range of cancer charities to develop new strategies to tackle diseases such as bowel, breast, prostate and cervical cancer. And because two women a week die in Scotland from

cervical cancer we will ensure Scotland is the first nation in the world to offer free vaccination against cervical cancer at the appropriate age as recommended by clinicians.

FASTER, BETTER TREATMENT

Scottish Labour has reformed and put record investment into the health service to improve treatment for patients. The result is more patients are being treated better and faster than ever.

Tackling waiting times has been a major priority for Scottish Labour because it is a major concern for patients. Quicker treatment means less time waiting in pain and a better chance of a full recovery. Hospital waiting times are now the lowest ever in Scotland and highlight the progress in the NHS. Patients are now guaranteed an appointment with a GP or nurse within 48 hours while nurse-led advice is available around the clock.

For hospitals half of all NHS patients do not wait at all and seven out of 10 patients are treated in less than 3 months. Scottish Labour has already delivered on its commitment to treat inpatients within 18 weeks a year ahead of schedule.

Labour is currently working towards guaranteed waiting times by the end of 2007 which will be a maximum of:

- 18 weeks for outpatient treatment.
- 16 weeks from GP referral through rapid access chest pain clinic or equivalents, to cardiac intervention.
- 4 hours from arrival to discharge or transfer for accident and emergency treatment.

These improvements in waiting times are being achieved at the same time as we are treating more patients. Since 1999, knee joint replacements are up 79%, cataract operations up 38%, hip joint replacements are up 28% and angioplasties up by 153%.

Scottish Labour will go further in the next term of the Scottish Parliament to improve waiting times. By 2011 Scottish Labour will:

- cut waiting to a maximum 18 weeks from referral by GP to both inpatient and outpatient treatment with even shorter waiting times for those who need more urgent treatment.
- cut waiting times to a maximum of nine weeks for an appointment with an Allied Health Professional, including chiropody, physiotherapy and clinical psychology.

Scottish Labour will continue to improve access to NHS services by extending opening hours and providing new services. We will introduce walk in treatment centres in the main commuter hubs of Scotland and we will expand the hours of nurse-led health centres.

We will ensure that local pharmacies play a greater role in providing medical advice for routine ailments. Scottish Labour will help patients make better informed choices by providing better information for patients.

Scottish Labour will continue to invest in NHS staff and will further increase the number of doctors in General Practice to speed up treatment. Scottish Labour will support health boards who want to employ salaried GPs. Scottish Labour will increase the use of our skilled nurses and allied health professionals to perform procedures previously carried out by doctors.

This means patients can be seen more quickly allowing nurses to develop even better skills and doctors to spend more time dealing with more serious cases.

LOCAL HEALTH CARE AND COMMUNITY HOSPITALS

Scottish Labour believes most patients want to be treated close to home where possible. Medical advances also mean that many patients no longer have to go to hospital for care or treatment. Because local health services are more convenient and people are more likely to use them, we have shifted the balance towards modern community health centres with modern, local facilities.

We have already agreed new arrangements with GPs and community health teams to offer more services locally, such as cervical screening, contraception, vaccinations, immunisations, child health surveillance; maternity and minor surgery. Scottish Labour will ensure more effective use of NHS 24, continue to enhance ambulance services, improve telemedicine, and expand more appropriate care through community emergency centres.

Scottish Labour is committed to building more community hospitals, and enhancing their role. Community hospitals allow more health care to be delivered locally, provide a hub for a community's wider health care team and help tackle health inequalities in more deprived communities.

A core set of services should be provided in rural general hospitals and telemedicine will allow them to act as the frontline of access

to services. GP premises will become a community health resource involving the whole primary healthcare team, with others visiting to allow the introduction of services not previously available locally such as dialysis and chemotherapy.

Scottish Labour will continue to create centres of clinical excellence, adhering to the principles of Delivering for Health, to ensure clinical staff have the opportunity to optimise their skills and we will maintain, protect and enhance where necessary a UK system of accreditation and regulation for health professionals.

Local NHS boards will be required to properly consult on any proposed changes to local services, including maternity and community emergency centres, before submitting plans to ministers. We will continue to drive the involvement of patients and the public in the redesign and development of services by piloting the direct election of a majority of health board members while considering reform of the public services.

Scottish Labour will insist that the appropriate network of community casualty units is in place to provide the overwhelming majority of accident and emergency care locally, more quickly and more efficiently for patients. Labour will

ensure that there is no change to existing accident and emergency services until that network is in place.

Scottish Labour will invest in preventative treatments to support people who want to do more to manage their long term conditions. For example, if a patient can monitor their own insulin levels they are more likely to keep their diabetes under control improving the quality of their life.

Prescription charges

Scottish Labour believe that no-one should be prevented from accessing medical assistance, and we recognise the anomalies within the current system of prescription charges. We will reform the system to make it fairer and more consistent and ensure that people can afford the medicines they have been prescribed. For those who depend upon repeat prescriptions, we will reduce the annual total amount payable.

Hospital Parking

Scottish Labour understands the importance to patients and families of being able to get to hospital for treatment or to visit loved ones. We passed the Transport Act in the Scottish Parliament to help make sure that there is accessible public transport to and from hospitals and health centres.

Scottish Labour will take further action to ensure that hospital car parking schemes do not discriminate against patients most in need or NHS staff while preventing the abuse of hospital parking.

SUPPORTING THE NHS WORKFORCE

None of this progress is possible without the efforts, skills and dedication of NHS staff. Scottish Labour will continue to support our NHS staff because we recognise the vital importance of the work they do for our ambitions for a fairer and healthier Scotland. That is why we have invested to increase the numbers of staff working in the NHS, to end low pay, crumbling morale and poor working conditions.

Scottish Labour will continue to invest in the current and future staff of our NHS. We will work with trade unions and the Royal Colleges to continue improving career opportunities and the retention of NHS staff. We will consider salaried student nurses; more support, including financial support, for those with carer responsibilities or transport problems; pre-training employment as well as further steps to reduce dependency on agency nursing. We will make sure that overseas nurses working in Scotland are not exploited.

Scottish Labour value and support the professional NHS cleaners, catering and administrative staff who play an important role in ensuring our health service meets the needs of patients. Scottish Labour will continue to improve standards of cleanliness in hospitals, make cleaning an important consideration in any review of new contracts, and make it a presumption that in-house cleaning services are the norm. The NHS must achieve Best Value in cleaning services and we will ensure that contracting out does not substitute cheapness for cleanliness.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

There is no better place to start improving the health of our nation than focusing on giving every child the best, healthiest start in life. Scottish Labour made this a priority across government.

Pre-natal support, including public health education on issues such as smoking is supported by post natal support provided by health visitors. We are a world leader in promoting breast feeding and Scottish Labour made it an offence for a mother to be stopped from breastfeeding in a public place. Nursery-based health education focuses on the provision of free water and fruit along with supervised tooth brushing. In primary school a network of active

school co-ordinators build on that nursery experience by finding new ways to get children active and playing sport. The Hungry for Success healthy school meals programme is now backed by legislation guaranteeing nutritional standards in school meals.

Local authorities now have powers to provide healthy snacks for children at any time of day. We have removed all branding from vending machines to help children make healthy choices. In secondary schools our focus on healthy eating and activity also includes a focus on diet, obesity and mental health.

Scottish Labour will:

- increase entitlement to free school meals to low-income working families.
- consult on how to best exclude junk food vans from the immediate vicinity of our schools and extend nutritional standards to health and leisure centres.
- enlarge the number of no car zones around our schools.
- ensure early recognition of, and intervention to assist, children with mental health problems.
- support the teaching of first aid, CPR and emergency life support to all 14-16 year olds.

Scottish Labour will build upon the success of Health Promoting Schools. Teachers, teaching assistants, nursery nurses and trade unions, will work with school community nurses to receive training and support in health promotion work.

HEALTHIER LIFE STYLES

Smoking

Scottish Labour is determined to tackle our high smoking rates, to prevent future generations from starting to smoke and to protect our wider communities from second-hand smoke.

Scottish Labour led the UK with the ban on smoking in enclosed public spaces. This bold and brave step was first suggested by Labour and consistently opposed by the Conservatives. It is one of the most far reaching contributions to Scotland's health since the setting up of the NHS. People are already smoking less and Scottish Labour will build on this radical legislation.

- Scottish Labour will ban the sale of cigarettes to those under 18s.
- We will act to ensure shops selling cigarettes to underage children will have their licenses suspended and we will make the shop pay for a public notice of the offence.

- Tobacco sales will become subject to the national test purchasing scheme we are introducing for alcohol sales.
- We will make smoking cessation programmes available in secondary schools.

Scottish Labour will work to stop young people taking up smoking and we will continue to highlight the particular health risks of smoking for young women and expectant mothers.

Alcohol misuse

Scottish Labour will continue to take tough action to reduce alcohol misuse in Scotland. The effects of alcohol misuse are felt throughout our communities and across all age groups but we will continue to target binge drinking and anti social behaviour

We have established ground-breaking partnerships and joint working between manufacturers, retailers, the licensed trade, health experts and governments to promote sensible drinking messages in innovative and varied ways. The results will be reviewed in two years time. Individuals have a responsibility to drink sensibly and to take responsibility for themselves, their friends and families. Drink driving and the sale of alcohol to children must be stamped out.

We will encourage licensing boards and licensees to negotiate voluntary agreements to limit discounted prices.

Scottish Labour has passed legislation to tackle irresponsible promotions that encourage binge drinking.

Scottish Labour has ensured tough action on retailers who sell to children by agreeing to introduce test purchasing of alcohol across Scotland. We will:

- act to ensure shops selling alcohol to underage children will have their licenses suspended and we will make the shop pay for a public notice of the offence.
- continue to run advertising campaigns and publish information for parents to raise awareness of the dangers of irresponsible drinking.
- work in partnership with the UK government and European colleagues to push to for the number of alcohol units to be printed on drinks packaging.

Diet

Scottish Labour will continue to encourage people to eat more fruit and vegetables, to lower salt and fat intake, and mothers to breast feed babies for the best start in life.

Scottish Labour will:

- do more to improve availability of healthy food and nutritional information for people in deprived areas, including through support for the establishment of food cooperatives.
- work in partnership with the UK government and the food industry to improve the clarity and effectiveness of food labelling.
- provide in hospitals, schools, and prisons nutritious and, where possible, locally sourced, food.

Scottish Labour will establish a food industry partnership, similar to our action to tackle alcohol misuse, to draw together key stakeholders including manufacturers, retailers, nutritional experts and government to establish national education and action programmes for healthy eating and activity.

Physical Activity

The amount of exercise we take has a big impact on our health and wellbeing. It improves our physical and mental health, it builds confidence in our young people, and helps older people remain healthy for longer.

Scottish Labour is making good progress towards getting at least half of all adults and eight in 10 of all children to meet minimum recommended levels of physical activity. All children in nursery, primary and secondary schools have at least two hours of quality physical education a week, with an ambition to extend this.

Scottish Labour will:

- provide appropriate opportunities and support for physical activities such as dance and play for younger children. We will support men's health week and initiatives promoting women's health.
- GPs will be encouraged to refer patients for exercise as part of their recovery.
- make it easier for people to take exercise at work by working with employers and trade unions to adopt flexible working, discounted gym membership and installing equipment like showers and bicycle racks.

We will work to make it easier to take exercise in local communities and will work with community planning to provide the facilities that people want to stay active. Scottish Labour will go further by supporting pilot schemes of socially owned and prioritised physical activity centres.

Mental health

Care and support for people with mental ill-health and action to promote mental health and wellbeing has significantly improved with Scottish Labour and is now amongst the best in the world.

We have raised mental health awareness and enhanced the rights of people with mental health problems through a national programme to improve mental health and wellbeing, to raise public awareness, promote positive mental health, tackle the stigma of mental ill-health, reduce suicide and support recovery.

Scottish Labour will do more to tackle mental ill-health earlier, in particular, to reduce suicide amongst young men, and self harm and eating disorders amongst young women.

Scottish Labour will continue to support early intervention, appropriate local outreach and treatment services and education and awareness campaigns and initiatives to de-stigmatise mental health issues.

We will encourage better use of active management like counselling rather than drugs. We will work with doctors and medical schools to reduce our reliance on long term prescriptions to treat mental

ill-health and we will support community services which enable more people to remain in the community.

Deprivation and the working environment are important and workplaces are also important factors in mental health. Scottish Labour will do more to help people recognise the symptoms of mental ill-health earlier and to promote good mental health at work.

Oral Health

Tooth decay in children is now the lowest in Scotland since records began. This comes despite the huge damage done to NHS dentistry by the previous Conservative government. Now we can make further and faster progress.

Good oral health, instilled in early years, is a fundamental base for better general health.

Scottish Labour has made significant improvement in the dental health of children and we have made oral health an integral part of our public health programme.

Scottish Labour has ensured every child gets a free tooth brush, providing over 250,000 in the past three years. The majority of nursery children now get a free oral health pack as well as fresh fruit and water. Every child starting school has a

free dental check, and every six or seven year old is eligible for “Fissure Sealing” on their molars to help prevent tooth decay. Branding has been removed from sugary drinks vending machines in Scotland’s schools, we have excluded sugary drinks from lunch time menus and we are encouraging children to make healthy choices.

We will expand the number and scope of Childsmile projects and include them in Prevention 2010. We will ensure that no children are forcibly deregistered from NHS dentists and support oral health initiatives which have been very successful.

Scotland still suffers because the Tories encouraged dentists to opt out of the NHS. We have ensured increased levels of



funding and places to train NHS dentists for the future. Scottish Labour has increased funding for NHS dentists to encourage them to remain loyal to the NHS and we have supported the recruitment of salaried dentists.

Sexual health

Scottish Labour believes that good sexual health is an issue of respect and responsibility which should be addressed openly and without stigma. We will support a programme of national education campaigns, underpinned by locally delivered support and services.

DIGNITY IN CARE

Free personal care

Free personal care helps ensure dignity and respect for older Scots. Scottish Labour have invested in better care for the elderly in the community and remains committed to free personal and nursing care for all those older people who need it. We will work to drive up standards and quality of free personal care across Scotland.

We have reduced the delayed discharge of patients by 73% since 2002 but remain committed to ensuring that patients have access to appropriate care and support

systems before discharging them from hospital.

Scottish Labour will ensure health and social services work together to provide older and vulnerable people being cared for in their homes with the care they need.

We will continue to invest in aids and adaptations, take steps to end duplication in assessing needs and give a stronger voice to those who use the service about the provision of services. We want our care homes to provide the best quality of care and we want to see balanced, fair, transparent charging for care homes. We recognise the importance of a continuity of staff in care settings and will support the development of the care workforce. We will ensure that public money is tied to quality of care.

Carers

Scottish Labour recognise the tremendous contribution of unpaid carers and their need for support. We have quadrupled the investment in this support including £23.7m to local authorities to deliver improved help locally. Through the Care 21 Report we have prioritised respite, young carers, carer health and carer training.

The partnership of the Respite Task Group is developing innovative strategies for the future. GPs are now incentivised to provide help and support to carers but we recognise more has to be done to support carers and especially young carers. Scottish Labour will do more to ensure the needs of carers and the support offered by carer support organisations are valued, recognised and rewarded.

We will increase the resources available to councils to improve respite facilities for carers and we will ensure that short term home based respite support is established for carers to deal with crisis or emergency situations.



**BUILDING
A SUSTAINABLE
SCOTLAND**

Labour has placed sustainable development at the heart of government and environmental justice at the heart of our approach to sustainability, recognising that environmental degradation impacts most on those with the least choices and chances. This focus will continue, with sustainability a core strand of the Spending Review and environmental justice measures, such as those in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, implemented in full.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is the most serious long-term challenge our planet faces. There is now overwhelming evidence and a widespread scientific consensus that human activity is seriously affecting our atmosphere and, in turn, our climate. Without urgent and collective action, the danger is that this change could soon become both irreversible and catastrophic. Overcoming this threat will need concerted international action but also changes in behaviour by Governments, businesses and individuals. We all have a role to play.

With Labour, the UK has been at the forefront of both tackling climate change and pushing it up the international agenda.

Only a handful of countries will meet their Kyoto target for reducing greenhouse emissions. From Kyoto to the G8, from the Emissions Trading Scheme to aviation, Labour has been setting the pace.

But the scale of the problem and the urgency of the challenge mean we have to do more. Scottish Labour has a strong record. We have already committed to exceed Scotland's share of the UK's emissions targets in devolved areas and we will step up our efforts to lead in tackling climate change.

Scottish Labour will introduce a Scottish Climate Change Bill in parallel with the forthcoming UK legislation.

We will consult on how to reduce emissions through planning, energy, building standards, agricultural practice and incentives through local taxation.

Our programme will include:

- Tough new targets for renewable energy – at least 50% of electricity generation by 2020 – with targets brought forward where possible.
- Tougher building standards for energy efficiency and incentives to make the use of micro-renewables simpler and more attractive.
- Local authorities will be encouraged to develop decentralised energy companies and schemes and greater use will be made of Combined Heat & Power.
- Changes to food policy, encouraging local sourcing rather than unnecessary food miles and addressing farming practices that are a big part of Scotland's emissions.



Scotland, because of our expertise in energy, our strength in science and our natural advantages, including winds and tides, is superbly placed to be a world leader in renewable energy. This will be good for the environment and also good for jobs. We will support the renewable energy industry both by increasing the amount of domestic power from these

sources but also in helping export our knowledge, technical skills and innovation.

As well as generating power as carbon neutral as possible, we also need to ensure we don't waste energy. Scottish Labour will ensure that all new houses are built to higher energy efficiency standards and will incorporate micro-generation technologies as standard. We will also make it easier for people to upgrade their homes with small-scale micro-renewables, such as wind turbines and solar panels on houses and provide grants for doing so.

We will commit in our Scottish Climate Change Bill to cut CO² emissions by 60% by 2050 and introduce annual reports on progress to the Scottish Parliament to strengthen monitoring and accountability. We will set appropriate interim targets.

We will consider how the proposed UK Carbon Committee should best work with the devolved Scottish Government to reduce emissions across the economy and over time with the establishment of a Ministerial Committee on Carbon Reduction to drive change.

We will encourage every local authority and public sector organisations to set up carbon committees to continue the drive to reduce our CO² emissions at every level of decision making, again with annual reporting.

We will introduce carbon budgeting to ensure emissions are demonstrably reducing year on year.

ENCOURAGING ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR

Our daily choices about the way we live our lives have an impact on our environment and on climate change. Scottish Labour believes we all have difficult personal choices to make in tackling climate change and it is the role of government to assist people in making these choices.

Scottish Labour believes that every person and every sector in Scotland needs to play its role in tackling climate change. We will make it easier for people through continued investment in an integrated public transport system and continue to insulate pensioners' homes and provide free central heating to those most in need of it.

Our support and investment in new technologies and the sustainable energy industry will make it easier for families to heat and light their homes with power from renewable and non-carbon sources.

We will continue to encourage recycling and composting of waste, setting as challenging a target as possible. Our

ambition would be to recycle at least 70% of our waste by 2020.

We will develop carbon neutral schools and encourage every school to be an eco school, as part of a programme for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. We will establish an awards system for individual school students, with incentives for individual schools where they reduce their emissions.

Scottish Labour will give local tax reductions for households and businesses to provide an incentive for business and individuals in Scotland to play their part in tackling climate change. We will consider how best to help small businesses reduce their environmental footprint.

But before all this we need to reduce waste. We will reward households that reduce unnecessary waste. We will monitor voluntary measures by business to reduce excess packaging, and take further action if required.

We will set tough new targets for Scottish Government to be carbon neutral and ensure that the Scottish Executive and its agencies greatly increase their recycling rates.

Scottish Ministers will be expected to reduce carbon emissions in their daily

work, reducing unnecessary travelling, making better use of public transport, using video conferencing and other technology, and using trains instead of flights where possible.

We will supplement GDP with indicators of wider well-being. We will give serious consideration to adopting the footprint concept. We will make carbon calculators available so that individual citizens can focus on their personal contribution to reducing their carbon footprint. We will continue to work with business on environmental matters, in partnership with the Climate Change Business Delivery Group.

GREENER HOMES; GREENER COMMUNITIES

Scottish Labour's aspiration is for carbon free housing by 2016. We will raise building standards to provide homes that use less fuel and emit less carbon so they are more environmentally friendly and are cheaper to live in. Scottish Labour will

- progressively increase the standards of energy efficiency and micro generation that form part of new housing developments over the next Parliament by at least 15% by 2011.

- hold a series of design competitions to encourage the best housing design and technology to build carbon neutral new homes that are warm and cheaper to run.
- introduce a Scottish Standard for Sustainable Homes which will be a housing quality standard that will for the first time encourage eco friendly homes.
- work with local government to establish a local authority carbon trading scheme, where those that introduce more energy saving measures and fall below an emissions cap can sell the balance to their less efficient neighbours.

All Scots are entitled to live in a high quality environment, in safe communities where children and young people have spaces to play and where people can enjoy nature.

We will use our recently reformed planning law, establish a community environment standard and set up an action team of NGOs and others to improve access to greenspace for families and children, especially for areas where people have few opportunities to enjoy it. We will also look to strengthen and extend the community right to buy and encourage more young people into crofting.

Labour will:

- establish a new community environment standard. Our Scottish Housing Quality Standard has been key to improving Scotland homes. Our new community environment standard will have the same effect in improving community access to green space, places for children to play and green corridors.
- create a Partnership for Environmental Action with NGOs to help us deliver a green regeneration revolution.
- Scottish Labour introduced the community right to buy which has let rural communities take responsibility for the land on which they live and work. Scottish Labour will now simplify the process for communities to buy the land they live on. Where there is evidence of legal loopholes being used to frustrate the intentions of Parliament in the Land Reform Act we will act to close them.
- involve children and young people in planning play and activity areas to help ensure that communities have access to high quality urban greenspace including play areas, sports grounds, nature reserves, community gardens and allotments.

BUILDING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Scotland is recognised for having some of the most distinctively beautiful landscapes in Europe. Our tourism, fishing, farming, forestry and food and drink industries are vital to the sustainability of rural communities and the rural economy.

Scottish Labour is committed to sustaining thriving rural communities. We will continue to support the sustainable economic development of our rural areas as places where families choose to live.

Since 1999 life in rural Scotland has improved, with broadband connectivity, jobs, improved communications and investment in public transport.

Scottish Labour will protect and enhance our biodiversity and the habitats of our threatened wildlife.

Our vision of rural development is of innovative working enabled by technology, a commitment to thriving rural communities, and improved public transport and public services in rural areas. We will continue to free up rural land for affordable housing. The doubling of the Small Business Rates Relief Scheme will disproportionately benefit rural businesses.

Sustainable communities in rural Scotland

Scottish Labour introduced the community right to buy which has let rural communities take responsibility for the land on which they live and work. We will now simplify the process for communities to buy the land they live on, and where there is evidence of legal loopholes being used to frustrate the intentions of Parliament we will act to close them. We will discuss, in partnership with the UK Government, the role and operation of the Crown Estate. Having ensured access to Scotland's countryside for all, we will continue to support the development of the core path network.

Scottish Labour will also build on the success of the community right to buy in rural areas and look to extend this right-to-buy to larger communities.

Agriculture and fisheries

Scottish Labour will continue to develop a sustainable fishing industry that can support Scottish families for many years to come, building on the progress we have made with the establishment of Regional Advisory Councils, in recognising overfishing and developing a culture of compliance with the law. Scottish

Labour will also support historic fishing communities to diversify their local economies to ensure sustainable thriving communities into the future.

Labour's vision for Scottish farming is of an industry which provides employment and prosperity in rural areas; is profitable, producing high-quality, affordable food; and respecting and enhancing the environment. We will ensure that policies take account of the co-operative farming sector. We will address the challenges facing the dairy industry, and help young farmers enter the industry.

Resources from the Common Agricultural Policy will be devoted increasingly to environmental protection, alongside rural development and a sustainable farming industry. We will increase voluntary modulation to 15% over time.

Scottish Labour has made it possible to create new crofts - giving young people the opportunity to enter crofting - and to create forest crofts. We will act on the outcome of the review of crofting which we have initiated, giving a legislative underpinning to crofting as a valued and permanent feature of 21st century Scotland.

Scottish Labour will support legislation to protect the status and definition of Scottish whisky, a major employer in rural areas.

Labour will establish Scotland's first marine & coastline national park, and consider whether any further land areas merit designation for national park status.

Scottish Labour will introduce a Marine Bill, and consider the case for further nature protection legislation both on land and sea.

We want the sport of angling to flourish, and will balance the conservation of fish stocks with a presumption of the widest possible access.

Scottish forests

Scottish Labour will review the role of the Forestry Commission to ensure that it contributes to sustainable Scottish rural communities and to tackling climate change through demanding new targets for forest-planting to create carbon sinks, and to support the house building and furniture making industries. We will plant more native Scottish tree species.

Scottish Labour will grasp the opportunity for Scotland to become a world leader in producing energy with biomass technology. We make use of our vast

biomass source in Scottish forests and support the creation of supply chains across Scotland to encourage the use of biomass for energy. We will improve the advice available locally for those considering biomass energy. We will encourage local authorities and health boards to consider biomass solutions in building and renovation programmes and we will also remove potential barriers to biomass in the procurement process.

Scottish Labour will support greater use of wood from these trees in house building and furniture making.

Scottish Labour will task the Forestry Commission, Scottish Natural Heritage and other appropriate bodies to create a green corridor connecting woods, paths and parks across Central Scotland. We will continue the Woods In & Around Towns Initiative, and develop more urban forests for recreation, health and biodiversity.

Animal Welfare and Scottish Wildlife

Scottish Labour supports the rights of landowners and farmers to sensibly manage their land, the wildlife on it and

livestock. We remain firmly on the side of the majority of farmers and landowners who believe this should be done with respect for the diversity of wildlife and the Scottish environment and with animal welfare as a core concern.

Scottish Labour recognises that cruelty to animals is an indicator of the wider prevalence of violence in society. We will therefore consider what further measures are required to protect animal welfare. As a start, we will consult with a view to finally banning snaring, and the use of electric shock collars.

Scottish Labour has made it easier for police to prosecute people for animal cruelty. Scottish Labour will ensure that there is at least one wildlife crime officer in every police force and will introduce stronger sentences for these sorts of crimes, while considering other improvements to the legal process for environmental protection.

Scottish Labour will protect Scottish species and wildlife such as the red squirrel and wildcat, and tackle the damage sometimes caused by non-native species. We will also seek to re-introduce species where appropriate,

including the beaver and the common crane.

Food production and the Environment

Labour will support food and farming sustainability by reducing the disproportionate contribution of food and farming to climate change; increasing the use of local, unprocessed and organic food in school and hospital meals and other public sector catering; taking action to tackle food poverty and initiating localised food strategies for Scotland's most deprived communities; increasing organic food production and processing; continuing to support the development of farmers markets and developing local food hubs to support local producers and reduce food-related transport. This will be part of our wider policy of ethical procurement.

Water & sewerage

Scottish Water should remain publicly owned and accountable. We will constantly seek to strengthen ownership and accountability. Our objectives will be to continue to improve the quality of bathing waters, rivers and drinking water; minimise

any charge increases; improve customer service; upgrade infrastructure and minimise leaks.

We will also take further action towards the sustainable management of flooding and continue to tackle diffuse pollution robustly. We will review our legislation on flood management and planning to ensure the development of schemes fit for the 21st century, with a streamlined and more effective process.



**BUILDING
STRONG
FAMILIES**



Social justice is at the heart of Labour Party values. From the creation of the National Health Service, to the current drive to eliminate child poverty, it underpins our policies and ambitions. Thanks to Labour in Scotland and Westminster, opportunity and prosperity have been spread more widely with help going to the families and communities who need it most.

There are over 200,000 more people in work than in 1999. Long-term youth unemployment has virtually disappeared. Some of the biggest falls in unemployment are in the most deprived communities. Labour introduced, and has repeatedly increased, the national minimum wage to tackle poverty pay.

Pensioners have benefited from the winter fuel allowance, above inflation increases in the basic state pension and the Pension Credit. Older people in Scotland are enjoying free nationwide bus travel, free central heating and free personal care thanks to Labour at Holyrood.

The result is that living standards are rising and over 120,000 children and pensioners across the UK have been lifted out of poverty in Scotland.

Scottish Labour is also investing to improve housing and to regenerate town centres and communities. We are helping families take their first step on the housing ladder and small businesses to set up on our high streets. We are working hard to tackle discrimination, promote equality and to ensure everyone, young and old, has the chance to contribute to the health and strength of our society.

We now want to step up our efforts to spread prosperity and opportunity, to improve housing, regenerate deprived communities and lift people out of poverty. We are determined to halve child poverty, as we have promised, by 2010, to give tenants more control over their homes, to encourage home ownership and improve town centres and green spaces.

With an ageing population, Scottish labour want to see a change in the way Scottish society regards our older citizens, building respect and engaging them more in building Scotland's future.

Scottish Labour will:

- Increase free school meals for an extra 100,000 children in low income working families.
- Get tough on loan sharks and restrict them from visiting the communities they prey on.
- Create a National Older People's volunteering programme similar to Project Scotland.
- Within the National Planning Framework, allow for greater private sector house building, but with stricter conditions applied for design and environmental standards.
- Double the successful new build Homestake scheme which allows people on modest incomes to get onto the property ladder.

ENDING POVERTY IN SCOTLAND

Scottish Labour aims to end child poverty by 2020. For too long, communities in Scotland were scarred by poverty.

Close partnership working between the Labour-led administration in Holyrood and the Labour government at Westminster has begun to put this right by increasing

employment, making work pay and through targeted support to lift people out of poverty.

Labour has achieved our initial target of reducing child poverty by 2005 as we promised. Indeed, Scotland's progress on child poverty is ahead of the UK as a whole. At the same time we have reduced the number of pensioners living in poverty from one in three in 1997 to one in five. We have lifted over 120,000 children and 120,000 pensioners from relative poverty and made equally significant reductions in fuel poverty.

But Scottish Labour is determined to go much further, and we have set challenging long term targets to reduce poverty throughout Scotland.

Labour aims to end child poverty by 2020 and end fuel poverty by 2016. We are serious about these targets, and have set milestones along the way. We will step up our efforts in the third term of a Scottish Parliament to meet them.

We are serious about these targets, and have set milestones along the way. We will step up our efforts in the third term of a Scottish Parliament to meet them.

Labour will continue to make it easier for parents to go back to work. We will

continue to invest in the Working for Families fund, we will reform Sure start, and we will target a further 10,000 under 3s for high quality child care and support. Helping the parents get to work, and giving the children a great start in life.

Scottish Labour will help those families where parents are in work but have low incomes. In the first year of the next Parliament we will extend entitlement to free school meals to working families on maximum working tax credit which will give nearly 100,000 children access to a free healthy meal and reverse the shameful decision made by the Tories.

Labour's tax credits have lifted thousands of families above the poverty line and we will work to increase the uptake of tax credits in Scotland and to ensure everyone entitled to benefits and tax credit claims their full entitlement in Scotland.

Scottish Labour will establish a national anti-poverty unit, working for social justice, at the centre of the Executive, reporting directly to the First Minister.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Labour's financial inclusion strategy focuses on the most disadvantaged individuals and communities in Scotland. Families need access to affordable credit and to be protected from unmanageable debt. We have quadrupled membership of credit unions in Scotland since 2003 and we will continue to support credit unions and other organisations that provide alternative financial services like bank accounts, home insurance and mortgages.

In the next term we will develop community banking schemes and we will work with the commercial banking sector to ensure that all communities have access to basic banking facilities without having to pay more for them.

Scottish Labour will get tough on loan sharks. We will:

- ensure appropriate surveillance evidence is admissible in court.
- provide increased protection to witnesses.
- introduce Serious Crime Prevention Orders to exclude loan sharks from the communities they prey on.

SCOTLAND'S OLDER GENERATIONS

As Scotland's population ages, our attitudes to later life need to change.

Labour's vision is distinctive because it recognises that older people today have a great deal to contribute and are not a burden on society.

We have laid the foundation for progress with record investment in public services, particularly health services, free national bus travel, free personal and nursing care, and the free central heating and warm homes programmes.

Labour will go further to ease the financial burden on Scotland's pensioners. Within two years we will cut water and sewerage bills by 50% for all pensioner households.

Scottish Labour will expand opportunities for older people, build respect between the generations and improve the quality of life for all older people to help them remain in the local community and to ensure future governments listen more to older people.

Scottish Labour will:

- Encourage businesses to realise the business value of retaining and recruiting older workers and to establish new businesses and enable career changes in later life.

- Create new learning opportunities to increase the number of 50 plus learners in further and higher education and extend support for part-time study for older learners.

And to build respect between the generations we will:

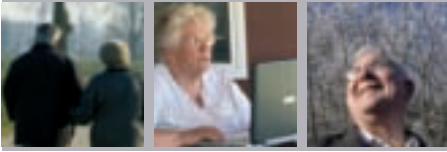
- Create a national older people volunteering programme similar to Project Scotland so older Scots can pass on their skill and experience to young people and schools.
- Establish a ground-breaking Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice to promote good practice.
- Review the future of grand-parenting in fostering and kinship care.

Scottish Labour is committed to help older Scots remain in the community. We will:

- create a 'care at home' scheme in each local area to identify those older people most at risk of harm or significant ill-health in the community.
- invest further in 'care and repair' to help older people make minor adaptations they need in their home.
- create a national helpline for older people modelled on 'child-line', using the expertise of older people's organisations in developing these services.

Labour wants to draw on the experiences of older Scots to inform our thinking for the future when older people will form a larger part of the population. We will Create a National Forum on Ageing to ensure government listens to older people. And we will:

- Require all public agencies to incorporate population ageing in their planning processes.
- Ensure that all local authorities have an older people's forum to inform them when they are designing and delivering services.



EQUALITY AND RACISM

A commitment to social and economic equality is perhaps the most fundamental of Scottish Labour's values. Tackling prejudice, intolerance and discrimination will always be one of our main priorities, not only because of the impact on the lives of those who experience it but because it holds us back as a nation.

We need to ensure that the potential of all our people is developed and will work to

ensure that our public services meet the needs of all.

Scottish Labour will develop and extend our "One Scotland, Many Cultures" campaign, to challenge racism and ensure that far-right groups never gain a foothold in Scotland. We will actively welcome new people to Scotland through the Fresh Talent initiative.

We will take forward specific initiatives with the STUC and others to tackle unscrupulous landlords or employers. And we will create a one-stop shop for employers, workers and migrants to provide advice on employment, skills and qualifications. We remain committed to the co-ordinated accessible and high quality services provided to refugees by voluntary organisations.

We will promote civil rights for disabled people and we will oppose homophobia in any form. We will continue to promote interfaith understanding and tackle religious hatred wherever it may be displayed.

THE THIRD SECTOR

Scottish Labour recognises the growing contribution of the voluntary and social enterprise sectors in Scotland. In the last parliament we made good progress through investing in the sector, reforming charity law fostering better relationships between

government and the sectors.

We are focussing more resources in the sector, including our first ever Social Enterprise Strategy for Scotland and we will work with them so they can deliver more public services and contribute to public service reform but not at the expense of public sector jobs. We will task Highlands and Islands Enterprise to consider an all Scotland approach to supporting Social Enterprises, recognising the dual enterprise and community benefits of the sector.

- ensure the voluntary sector is a full partner in community planning, further improve the relationship between the voluntary sector and local government, promote best practice in volunteering through the procurement process, reduce bureaucracy and regulation through our better regulation drive.
- streamline and stabilise funding arrangements affecting those social enterprise or voluntary sector organisations that provide services for local or central government, enter into longer term contracts to give stability to organisations and encourage good governance, fair employment standards and innovation, and ensure that voluntary sector and social enterprise organisations are treated fairly by funders.
- work with the sector to encourage more people to be trustees of voluntary organisations, ensure they get the support they need and secure the future of our bigger social economy organisations.

Scotland has high numbers of volunteers who provide services and make a significant contribution to policy making at both a local and national level. We will continue to support volunteers and the voluntary sector. We will:

We will focus on getting more young people into volunteering by expanding Project Scotland, promoting civic participation and voluntarism with a new National Citizenship Award in Scotland's schools.

REGENERATING COMMUNITIES

Scottish Labour is working to ensure our planning, housing and regeneration policies complement one another to regenerate areas affected by the loss of major industries, to build mixed communities, boost the economy, protect the environment and support family life.

Scottish Labour will:

- focus extra investment on communities through additional support for existing Urban Regeneration Companies.
- require developers of new housing schemes to include community facilities and high quality greenspace in their plans.
- focus on the protection of our industrial heritage as an aspect of regeneration, while securing environmental

improvements for example by creating foot and cycle-path networks, nature reserves and green corridors on vacant and derelict sites.

- ensure local people are involved at every stage of regeneration developments.

AFFORDABLE HOMES

Scotland's private housing market has been buoyant now for over a decade, and in that time average house prices have increased significantly. There is clearly an under supply of new homes.

Through the National Planning Framework, Scottish Labour will allow for a significant increase in the number of new private sector homes built in Scotland each year. However, any further expansion will be conditional on housebuilders and planners implementing higher standards of design, both of the individual properties and the communities created. There will also be a greater expectation that new property developments will include affordable social housing.

In areas of shortage, we will take the steps necessary to unlock the land supply and create new communities. In areas where replacement housing is needed we will encourage and facilitate the assembly of

land by public agencies to allow significant housing regeneration projects.

Scottish Labour will:

- double our successful newbuild Homestake scheme which allows people on modest incomes to get onto the property ladder. We will also extend the open market Homestake for existing properties in areas of greatest need across Scotland.
- maintain the right to buy with the exception of areas that have housing pressures or where the houses concerned are especially well suited for older people or people with disabilities.

RENTED HOUSING

While most people in Scotland live in owner occupied homes a significant number of Scots live in rented housing. Labour is committed to ensuring that everyone lives in decent warm homes in strong mixed communities and we are bringing together our policies on housing, regeneration and planning to make this happen.

We gave tenants the right to decide whether to transfer their homes to new housing associations to lever in more investment, and in places like Glasgow, Inverclyde, Argyll and Bute and Dumfries and Galloway

very substantial refurbishment of the existing stock is taking place.

Across Scotland, every socially rented home now has central heating and most have been re-insulated. Whether tenants have voted for stock transfer or not we will continue to improve socially rented homes. Labour will support councils working in partnership with housing associations, housing co-ops and others to meet changing patterns of housing tenure, the needs of an ageing population, and more single person occupancy.

Tenants who choose to remain within local authority housing provision will be given greater choice about the management arrangements regarding that stock including the option of co-operative management at local level.

Scottish Labour will further improve the standard of rented housing in both the private and socially rented sectors, ensuring all social landlords meet the Scottish Quality Housing Standard by 2015, and requiring them to submit plans setting out a strategy for ensuring a sustainable future for the stock they are responsible for.

We will raise standards in the private rented sector through our landlord accreditation scheme to build a sector that can contribute

to meeting housing need. Labour will now go further to give socially rented tenants more control over the management of their homes with a Tenants Management Bill, which will:

- give tenants more control over investment and maintenance enabling groups of tenants who want much greater say in managing their own tenancies the opportunity to establish co-tenancy schemes.
- allow more flexible management arrangements including the use of age restrictions for allocation of certain types of property, for example where this would benefit those living in high-rise buildings.
- ensure that older people are given priority in accessing housing suitable for their needs as it becomes available.
- require all registered social landlords to put in place “fast track” effective arrangements for preventing their tenants being plagued by persistent anti-social behaviour.

HOMELESSNESS

Scottish Labour has introduced the most progressive homelessness legislation in Europe. We will ensure that as part of our commitments to those who are in housing

need and homeless, local authorities will be asked to report on how they address homeless applications and address the needs of those on housing waiting lists.

We have expanded who qualifies to be re-housed as priority need and ended the need for rough sleeping on our streets, which is now a fraction of the problem it was under the Conservatives.

Scottish Labour will continue to prioritise assistance for the most vulnerable groups of homeless people, channelling resources to get rid of hostels and end the practice of placing people in bed and breakfast accommodation.

FUEL POVERTY

Scottish Labour has insulated over 300,000 homes, improved benefit uptake for thousands of older people and provided over 78,000 free central heating schemes through our Warm Homes Programme in Scotland.

We will take forward our commitment to tackling fuel poverty by targeting resources on the most fuel poor, especially older and vulnerable people. The focus will be on increasing energy efficiency through better controlled heating, improved insulation and schemes which help reduce energy use or

the cost of energy such as combined heat and power schemes.

We will work closely with social housing providers to take forward energy efficiency schemes while continuing to provide replacement systems for older people without central heating in the private sector. Advice on energy use and help with claiming benefits will continue to be provided. We will ensure that everyone eligible can take advantage of our fuel poverty programme, wherever in Scotland they live.

Scottish Labour will examine ways to work with power companies to extinguish the price inequalities that accompany the use of power cards.

PLANNING

Labour will implement the provisions of the Planning Bill which will transform the culture of planning in Scotland. We will utilise National and local development plans as a means of promoting public consultation and involvement in planning decisions. Local development plans in particular will allow individuals and communities to express their views on plans before implementation and hold the authorities to account for the way they implement them. We will publish a best practice charter to be followed

by all public bodies on planning matters – including Scottish Water and Scottish Enterprise.

TRANSPORT

As our economy continues to prosper with Labour, people increasingly need and want to travel more, for both work and leisure purposes.

Labour’s vision is to provide a reliable, safe and inclusive transport system which enables people to move around in a way that respects our environmental objectives. We want transport policies that contribute to our commitment to tackle climate change, through the reduction of carbon emissions.

Labour will invest £1 billion a year in transport with 70 per cent of our investment in transport directed towards public transport.

Labour has delivered free Scotland-wide bus travel for older people and introduced a young persons concessionary travel scheme.

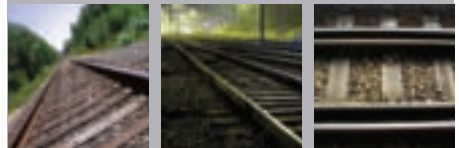
RAIL NETWORK

Scottish Labour has committed significant levels of investment to growing the rail

network in Scotland. We now have new lines, new rolling stock, new safety measures and improved timetables. As a result, rail passenger numbers in Scotland have increased sharply and are now at the highest level since 1964.

We are committed to improving the rail network even further, with new lines and new stations. Amongst a package of railway improvements, Labour will:

- Complete the Glasgow and Edinburgh airport rail links; re-open the Waverley line from Edinburgh to the Borders, Airdrie – Bathgate line and Stirling – Alloa; and complete the Waverley station upgrade all in the lifetime of the next Parliament.
- Take forward the Glasgow Cross rail project and ensure further local rail improvements.
- Improve accessibility at train stations.
- Reintroduce trams into Edinburgh.



Scottish Labour believes the train journey times between Edinburgh and Glasgow have to improve to make the business connections and commuter travel more

efficient. We are committed to cutting the journey time between Glasgow and Edinburgh and will take forward a feasibility study to ensure a fast link service between Scotland's two biggest cities.

Scottish Labour will take further steps to integrate timetabling and through ticketing between rail and bus operation, to ensure that the travelling public has a high quality, affordable, safe rail and bus system with certainty over access and timetables.

We will work to ensure value for money and greater public accountability for the delivery of the Scotrail franchise. The case for running the Scottish franchise on a not for profit basis needs to be fully examined as part of the preparation for the next franchise.

BUSES

Buses are an essential part of the daily commute and lives of Scots. In recent years, the number of bus passenger journeys has started to increase after decades of decline. In the next Scottish Parliament, Scottish Labour will renew our focus on investment in the Scottish bus network.

We will also consider all legislative models to improve quality and develop new service

links across Scotland, including the use of powers within the Transport (Scotland) Act to impose quality contracts where the creation of quality partnerships is subject to delay.

Scottish Labour support modernised regulation whereby quality and standards are improved and service stability is secured, based on the model of the agreement between Strathclyde Passenger Transport and First Bus.

We will ensure more night bus services are included in bus contracts and introduce through ticketing, allowing passengers to buy one ticket to travel on all forms of transport across Scotland.

We recognise the valuable role that community transport schemes play, particularly in rural communities and will continue to work with local partners to support these schemes.

ROADS

A modern, decent road network is vital for business interests, car owners and also provides the backbone for our bus services. Scottish Labour will work hard to ensure that we improve our road network, improve road safety and tackle congestion for all road users. When tackling congestion on

our roads, we are not only improving the day to day lives of motorists but we are also helping to reduce the levels of noise and air pollution which affect us all.

Scottish Labour will further improve Scotland's national trunk network, taking forward strategic projects when resources allow. We will complete the M74; M8 Ballieston / Newhouse improvements; M80 Stepps / Hags, the A8000 and the Aberdeen by pass.

Scottish Labour will then look carefully at the case for strategic road improvements,



**BUILDING
STRONG
FAMILIES**

including improvements to the A9, A96, A82 and A75.

Labour will continue the successful Freight Facilities Grant in order to take more freight from roads on rail and water.

FORTH ROAD CROSSING

Scottish Labour knows that a crossing across the Forth is vital to the entire economy of the East coast of Scotland. It is a critical transport and economic concern. Scottish Labour will build a replacement forth crossing and will use emergency legislation if necessary.

Scottish Labour will also remove all tolls on the Tay Bridge and for multiple-occupancy cars on the Forth Road Bridge.

ISLAND AND RURAL TRANSPORT

To assist with the additional challenges that come with island life, and to support families and businesses on Scotland's islands Scottish Labour will continue to support lifeline island transport services.

In the third term of the Scottish Parliament we will build on the existing Air Discount Scheme, from which almost 14,000 island

residents have benefited. We will create a new scheme to give 40% reductions in the cost of ferry travel for foot passengers, with further discount arrangements for cars and freight.

AIR & FERRY TRAVEL

Airports and aviation are making a growing contribution to our economic prosperity and Labour's Route Development Fund has created dozens of new direct air routes into Scotland. Scottish Labour will further develop connections for both business and tourism to other markets. However, we acknowledge the environmental impact of aviation and will continue to support international moves to tackle it.

Labour will support further expansion of commercial ferry services, both as a link to Scandinavia and continental Europe. We will support proposals for a ferry crossing on the Forth to give Edinburgh / Fife commuters more options for travelling.

WALKING, CYCLING AND SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Scottish Labour has a clear commitment to promoting environmental sustainability through our transport policies.

We want to make walking and cycling a more convenient, attractive and realistic choice for many more short journeys. The funding we have provided for local authorities has paid for thousands of small-scale schemes to encourage walking and cycling, such as crossings, pedestrian areas, cycle lanes or advanced stop signs. We will continue to develop safer routes to schools, and will look to pilot a scheme of special school buses.



BUILDING CREATIVITY

For a small country Scotland has an immense reputation for its literature, its artists, its music and its sport. Scotland's unique place in literary history was acknowledged when Edinburgh was named as UNESCO's first World City of Literature. From Burns to Rankin, from Rennie Mackintosh to Maxwell Davies Scotland has always punched above its cultural weight.

In recent years we have seen a new energy and confidence in Scotland. We are more outward looking, secure in our worth and history, but modern and cosmopolitan in our outlook, eager to attract people from all over the world to visit, study, work and live.

Devolution has played its part in this new confidence. So, too, has Scotland's growing prosperity with Labour. We have turned round Scotland's population decline and seen a transformation in our cities and towns, which rank now with the most dynamic and vibrant in Europe. We have created the National Theatre of Scotland, won the right to host the Ryder cup, hosted a series of world events such as the MTV Europe Awards, world and European sporting events and we are bidding to hold the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

But we want Scotland to be even better. Scottish Labour will build on this exciting progress to support Scottish elite artists and athletes, to encourage more people

and particularly the young to enjoy and take part in culture and ensure Scotland remains a magnet for people from all over the world. We will promote Scotland both at home and abroad so we can make a real contribution to meeting global challenges and can take advantage of the opportunities that exist to increase inward investment, in-migration and tourism.

Our vision is of a confident and vibrant Scotland – a Scotland which is proud of its beautiful surroundings and rich history, but which also embraces the opportunities presented by change. Scottish Labour remains committed to an inclusive Scotland, where everyone – no matter their background - shares in Scotland's rich cultural and sporting heritage.

SCOTTISH SPORT

Sport is an integral part of Scottish life and culture. Football may be the national game, but many other sports attract thousands to take part every week, some with large audiences and international attention.

We already know that Scotland will host the Ryder cup in 2014, and Scottish Labour will pull out all the stops to bring the 2014 Commonwealth Games to Glasgow.

If the bid is successful we will immediately introduce a Commonwealth Games Bill, enabling the organisation of the games and ensuring that the games are as environmentally friendly as they can be.

2014 will be the year some of the world's biggest sporting events come to Scotland and Scottish Labour will designate it the Scottish Year of Sport, investing to ensure the widest participation so that all of Scotland gets the most out of it.

We will create a University of Sport based at an existing institution to provide the support our elite athletes need to become champions and win competitions in 2014 and beyond.

PROMOTING SPORTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Scottish Labour believes that encouraging participation in sports and other physical activity is an investment in our nation's health and wellbeing. Scottish Labour will expand the active schools provision available to secondary school pupils and have more competitive sports in Scotland's schools. We will also increase the number of volunteers in sport.

Labour will introduce a fund – Scotland's Sporting Ambassadors - to enable young

sports people to represent Scotland abroad. This could help everyone from those in the Special Olympics, to young golfers struggling to move on to the pro circuit.

Inspired by Scotland's swimming success at the Melbourne Commonwealth Games, Scottish Labour will give every child in Scotland the opportunity of free swimming lessons – helping our young people stay active and providing them with an important life-saving skill. We will also learn from our champion swimmers by seeking to expand a professional coaching structure to other sports, as part of a significant boost in support for coaching.

Scottish football has worked closely with Scottish Labour to tackle sectarianism at home. And it has shown commitment to tackling the group of young people who are not in education, employment or training.

Scottish Labour will invest in local facilities - £10 million every year for 10 years to renew our football infrastructure. We will work with the SFA to create a National Development Fund to support new national football facilities which will include 1500 grass pitch upgrades; 500 changing facilities refurbishments; the creation of 60 new community hubs; 200 new synthetic pitches; and one new additional regional centre for Scottish football.

We will complete our programme of regional multi-sport facilities. We are committed to a fifty metre pool in Aberdeen.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Scottish culture enhances our quality of life at home and promotes Scotland abroad. We have seen a cultural renaissance in recent years shaped by a new confidence in our country. Scottish Labour is determined to support the arts both regionally and nationally and encourage wider enjoyment and participation.

We have built on Scotland's cultural strengths by launching the National Theatre for Scotland and the Screen Academy at Napier University. Scottish Labour will build on this base in the next Scottish Parliament, developing and extending the level of support that is provided for cultural participation and expression.

Scottish Labour will introduce a Culture Bill. It will bring in cultural entitlements so that everyone from whatever background can benefit from Scotland's cultural renaissance and have the opportunity to enjoy high quality artistic performances and access to our national collections.

Scottish Labour believes that access to culture is an integral part of education and

we will continue to ensure the cultural rights of all Scotland's young people.

We want all our young people to have their right to be enriched by the arts and culture enshrined in legislation. We will improve the take-up of cultural participation among young people in education and work with the arts to provide opportunities for everyone to enjoy the arts throughout their lives.

We will expand the Youth Music Initiative further, establish a fund for headteachers to purchase instruments, and allow young people to continue their music tuition in secondary schools. We will support and develop cultural coordinators in schools.

To broaden the use of libraries, Scottish Labour will expand opening hours into the evenings and weekends; increase internet and e-access; and expand facilities such as one-stop shops.

Scottish Labour believes that public art can have a significant impact in lifting people's spirits. Labour will develop more public art in partnership with the private sector. We want to see artists-in-residence supporting our regeneration programme for Scotland's towns. As a start, we will take forward a public art landmark on the M74 near Gretna, as the gateway to Scotland.

We will explore ways of putting more of Scotland's holdings of art and photography in store on display in public places like schools and shopping and community centres. We will consider how best to celebrate and display work produced by Scottish artists and artists based in Scotland.

We will utilise the opportunities afforded by the 2009 Year of Homecoming to further raise the profile of Scottish Artists and our excellent national collections.

We will establish an arts futures fund to encourage the best Scottish arts graduates to work in Scotland using their talents to enrich our local communities.

Scottish Labour will make it easier for people to get tickets and information about cultural and sporting events and a single online box office will be developed for as many of Scotland's cultural events as possible. We will also tackle ticket touts, through joint action with the UK government, with a specific focus on tickets for gigs and football matches.

FUNDING

Scottish Labour has more than doubled investment in cultural activities since devolution. We will ensure that funds

are made available to support long-term projects and that new funds continue to be available to support fresh initiatives including for local authorities. In particular, we will support cultural activities that reflect our belief in promoting excellence and participation. We will seek to increase funding for the arts from the private sector.

Labour will incentivise new artistic work created in Scotland and increase art collections through two major new funds' a national fund for commissioning new work, and an enhanced budget for acquisitions of artwork.

WIDER CULTURAL ACTIVITY

Scottish Labour will celebrate and conserve Scotland's built heritage as well as our world-famous landscapes, and will modernise legislation in this area if required. A number of new buildings have attracted attention around the world, such as the Scottish Parliament and Maggie's Centre in Dundee. We will use this confidence in architecture in Scotland to ensure that we create not only good buildings, but good, welcoming communities too.

We will continue to ensure that the skills required to maintain our historic buildings - such as stonemasonry - are available in

Scotland, by supporting the projects that ensure their survival, in particular training. We will ensure that owners of listed buildings keep them in proper repair, and ensure that the wider community interest is taken into account.

Scotland has a thriving creative scene in literature, film, TV, contemporary and traditional music. We will support artists, musicians and film makers based in Scotland through our national agencies. We will encourage contemporary music by supporting emerging artists and take every opportunity to promote their work.

SCOTLAND'S LANGUAGES

We will continue to provide support for a 'virtual' classroom system, using new technology to link Gaelic classes from across Scotland together.

We will support an expansion of opportunities and a removal of obstacles to growing the number of Gaelic medium teachers.

We will enhance the level of support for Gaelic broadcasting – bringing Gaelic into more homes and schools. We will increase the visibility of Gaelic, for example in road signage and through support for Gaelic arts.

Given its diverse nature, we will investigate the best way to promote Scots and will work to build a consensus on the most appropriate role in our society for it.

We will support the development of children's literature in Scots.

We will seek to increase the numbers of people learning British Sign Language and address the shortage of interpreters, as part of a recognition of BSL alongside spoken languages.

We will encourage local authorities to take into account all of the languages spoken in their area, supporting joint working to provide regional solutions on translation services for languages that do not require a full service in each council area.



**BUILDING
BETTER
GOVERNMENT**

Scottish Labour remains committed to the principles of devolution. The Union has served us well giving us the advantage of being in a strong UK economy with the flexibility of devolution to make our own decisions on key domestic matters. The best future for Scotland lies in us building up Scotland not breaking up Britain. Scottish Labour will continue to use the flexibility in the Scotland Act to allow any necessary changes we need to make Scotland stronger – as has already happened, for example, with powers over railways.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

The first term of the Scottish Parliament built a new institution and the second delivered radical new laws such as the smoking ban and comprehensive justice reforms. Now is the time to take stock and to implement a fundamental change in the way Scottish government delivers legislation and regulation.

We will ensure our overall legislative programme for the next term is smaller and more focussed on the big strategic challenges for Scotland, like climate change, learning and social justice.

Scottish Labour will reduce the regulatory burden and bureaucracy, exercise discipline and continue control of public finances, and make services more accountable to the people they serve.

Scottish Labour will ensure that the Scottish Parliament leads in reducing the regulatory burden on Scottish households, businesses and the voluntary sector. We will prevent duplication or unnecessary reinterpretation of existing regulatory regimes, including those imposed by UK and European regulators and we will remove the unintended consequences of existing Scottish Parliament legislation.

We will introduce sunset clauses into legislation, a ‘one in, one out’ rule for new regulations, and cut administrative burdens by 25% before 2012. We will set overall targets for administrative burdens and establish the most effective way to regulate and scrutinise public bodies.

We will reduce the time spent filling out forms for households, businesses and others. The sharing of information in a smarter way would lead to more effective use of “check and sign”, for example, where forms are already filled in, and all the applicant need do is check it and sign. We will ensure the voluntary sector benefit from a new application system for grants based on three year funding and the

integration of applications to avoid multiple forms for different funds. We will streamline bureaucracy between Ministers in Edinburgh and London by, for example, cutting out duplication in applications to, and information required by, UK and Scottish government departments.

Scottish Labour believe in open government and will protect the principles of the Freedom of Information Act which we introduced. We will keep freedom of information under review to ensure that the right of individuals to information is upheld.

Devolution has transformed the way in which policy is made and delivered in Scotland. Civic participation is now central to how we work in Scotland. Scottish Labour are determined that the next parliament does more to engage with those groups of people whose participation in consultation and policy making is lower. We will use new technology and networks. We will also encourage policy thinking independent from government. Scottish Labour will build and support more non-government think tanks that can influence policy in Scotland. We will build on the Scottish Executive's Futures Project, and the Parliament's Futures Forum.

Scottish Labour will improve Parliamentary procedure. We will build on the success of the petitions process and committee system in the Scottish Parliament. We will build in post-legislative scrutiny, going

back to Acts that have been passed to check if they are still needed and if they are working as intended. And we will ensure the parliament has even more scrutiny of the First Minister, who will attend regular sessions with all Committee Convenors.

We have modernised government and will continue to do so. We have worked to make the political process more accountable in both the formulation of policy and how it is implemented. Scottish Labour will go further.

The First Minister and Ministers will be more accessible to ordinary people.

Scottish Labour will:

- Hold a community Cabinet at least once a year, where the Cabinet will meet out and about around Scotland. As well as the meeting itself, the cabinet will engage with the local community, listen, and act on their concerns.
- Give people more access to Ministers including the First Minister, to talk about issues of concern to them – including an annual youth day for Scotland's young people to make themselves heard.

FINANCING LOCAL SERVICES

Labour recognises the concerns people in Scotland have about the Council Tax and we will continue to exercise discipline and control of public finances. With Labour, Council Tax increases have been less each year than under any of the years of the previous Conservatives, and we will work with colleagues in local government to keep Council Tax increases low.

We are firmly opposed to any form of local income tax.

Labour is committed to making the council tax system more stable, fair and proportionate.

That's why Labour will:

- Deliver financial stability for taxpayers through our pledge not to increase council tax by more than inflation for the next four years.
- Add two extra bands to the existing system; one at the top and one at the bottom. This will ease the financial pressure for those in the lowest value properties and ensure that those in the higher value properties make a more proportionate contribution.



Labour believes that, on balance, a property based local taxation system is the right way to help fund local services. However we understand that pensioners on fixed incomes can find local taxation a particular financial burden.

Pensioners on low incomes are entitled to council tax benefit and Scottish Labour will take further steps to improve take up rates.

All households pay water and sewerage charges as there is no benefit available to help with these charges. So we will reduce water and sewerage charges for every pensioner household initially by 50% within two years, and we will seek to implement further reductions as resources allow and move towards complete abolition for those households.

Pensioner households in a band D property will be around £180 better off a year as a result.

Scottish Labour will continue our year on year increases in grant to local government and we will expect local government to move towards shared services, become more efficient, and work to provide the tax payer with the best value for money possible.

Scottish Labour will allow local authorities to retain a proportion of business rates

raised locally and will be innovative in assisting local authorities to create more of their own income.

We recognise the particular challenges that face Edinburgh as the capital city, and will ensure that appropriate status is conferred to provide for the services needed in our capital.

Scottish Labour is committed to strengthening local democracy and we will continue to develop a more flexible relationship between local authorities and devolved government based on trust and agreed outcomes. Scottish Labour's long held commitment to empowering local people is at the heart of our modernising agenda.

Scottish Labour are determined to do more to harness the enthusiasm of those who work in our public services. They need support to innovate. They need space to say when programmes are going wrong or that they see challenges ahead that we may not meet. They want to be empowered, allowed to be flexible, to spend more time with people they serve and less time being measured, monitored, evaluated and inspected.

Scottish Labour will continue our programme of public service reform.

We will work to foster trust. We will support local government, the voluntary sector and public servants to get on with their jobs. We will consider how existing democratically elected representatives through the council as a corporate entity can be given greater oversight over quangos. Our public service reform agenda is designed to ensure that services are more user-focussed and efficient.

We will encourage more shared services across the public sector to free up resources, review the local authority funding formulas to ensure a greater reflection of need and merge funding streams to give locally elected politicians more control and flexibility in how they provide services.

Scottish Labour will review the approach to PPP to ensure a level playing field between PPP and conventional capital procurement and will have the aim of excluding soft facilities management services from future PPP contracts. In addition, we will review the implementation of PPP staffing protocol. And we will work to ensure that procurement takes into account much more than price and considers good employment conditions and socially acceptable, environmentally friendly and local procurement options. Scottish Labour will strive to ensure equal pay in all public service organisations.

HEALTH, POLICE AND FIRE BOARDS

We are seeing more and more joined up working and co-operation across different public services. While this is welcome, there is more that we can do to improve. Scottish Labour believes that there are areas where a co-ordinated national approach across police force boundaries is required. We will examine existing structures to see how this can best be achieved. Scottish Labour will reform police and fire boards within our wider public service reform to make them more relevant to the communities they serve and give them the powers and responsibilities to hold services to account.

Patients, service users and staff are the focus of the NHS in Scotland and are involved in NHS decisions making. Scottish Labour has ensured that health boards are under a statutory requirement to consult with the public about changes to the services; local councillors sit on health boards ensuring greater accountability to the public and annual reviews are no longer conducted behind closed doors. We will continue to drive the involvement of patients and the public in the redesign and development of services by piloting the direct election of a majority of health board

members while considering reform of public services.

Community planning is helping local authorities work together with local people to plan and deliver better services, delivering real improvements to the quality of people's lives. Scottish Labour will continue to ensure that community planning best meets the needs of local people and enhance the involvement and engagement of local people.

EUROPE

Scotland benefits from having the best of both worlds. On the one hand we are part of a large, powerful member state. On the other we have a real presence at the heart of decision making, ensuring Scotland's unique voice is heard at the heart of Europe, through Scotland House in Brussels. We are a leading region with legislative powers, and have held the Presidency of the Conference of such regions. We will build on this, in particular developing the role of legislative regions in the EU, including working with our MEPs.

In an ever-changing Europe, we want to encourage Scots to have a better sense of connection within the EU, at both a political and cultural level. We will examine further ways to bring Europe into the classroom

and communities and, as decisions start to be taken more locally, encourage and expand the engagement of Scots as European citizens.

Scotland is engaging with the wider world, spearheaded by our presence in China and the USA. We will build on these successes to promote Scotland in key parts of the world.

SCOTTISH COMMITMENT TO FAIR TRADE AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

We believe that devolved government in Scotland has a role to play supporting the international development work of the UK Government. The co-operation agreement signed between Scotland and Malawi has helped pioneer a nation-to-nation and region-to-region model of aid work, allowing us to focus on areas where the responsibilities of our devolved government can be used in partnership with the Malawian government to help promote development.

We believe that Scottish volunteers, working with aid organisations, have a real contribution to make to the developing



world and we will look to develop volunteering opportunities at home and abroad for a wider range of people, giving many Scots, who may otherwise have missed the opportunity, the chance to contribute their skills and expertise.

Fair Trade is a model way of empowering people in both the developing and the developed world. By promoting Fair Trade, we tackle global poverty and work towards our end goal of forever defeating it.

As we work towards our goal of becoming

one of the world's first accredited Fair Trade Countries, community involvement will be our key aim, encouraging a bottom-up approach to Fair Trade. We will encourage towns, cities and universities to aim for Fair Trade status. We will build on the good work of the Cooperative movement, faith groups, local authorities and community groups to achieve this status, and will continue to work with them in order to ensure that Fair Trade grows as a way of doing business.



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